

**STANDARD BY-LAWS RELATING TO FIRE BRIGADE SERVICES**

The administrator hereby in terms of section 96bis(1) of the Local Government Ordinance, 1939, read with section 17 of the Fire Brigade Services Ordinance, 1977, (Ordinance 18 of 1977), publishes the standard by-laws set forth hereinafter, which have been made by him in terms of the said section 96 bis (1).

---

**INDEX**

**SECTION**

1. Definitions.
2. Organisation of Service.
3. Duty to Assist.
4. Procedure on the Outbreak of Fire.
5. Closing of Streets.
6. Obstruction and Damage.
7. Wearing of Uniform and Insignia.
8. Combustible Material.
9. Safety of Premises and Buildings.
10. Exits.
11. Gas-filled Devices.
12. Making of Fires.
13. Fires in Chimneys, Flues and Ducts.
14. Attendance of Firemen.
15. Removal of Liquid or other Substances.
16. Payment for Attendance and Service.
17. Exemption from Payment of Charges.
18. False Information.
19. Telephones, Fire Alarms and other Apparatus.
20. Offences and Penalties.

**Definitions**

1. In these by-laws, unless the context otherwise indicates: -  
**“approved”** means approved by the chief fire officer;

**“chief fire officer”** means the person appointed by the Council in term of section 3(1) of the Ordinance read with section 20 of that Ordinance and includes any member of the service representing the chief fire officer in the administration of these by-laws and any official representing the chief fire officer and in control of any section, station substation, fire fighting operation or other emergency operation, situation or inspection, as the case may be;

**“council”** means a city council, town council, village council or health committee constituted in terms of the provisions of the Local Government Ordinance, 1939, (Ordinance 17 of 1939), and includes the Transvaal Board for the Development of Peri-Urban Areas established in terms of the Transvaal Board for the Development of Peri-Urban Areas Ordinance, 1943, (Ordinance 20 of 1943), in whose areas of jurisdiction these by-laws apply;

**“emergency situation”** means a situation or event which constitutes or may constitute a serious danger to any person or property;

**“occupier:”** means any person in actual occupation or control of any land, premises, or building, or any portion thereof without, regard to the title under which he occupies or controls, such land, premises, building, or portion thereof;

**“Ordinance”** means the Fire Brigade Services Ordinance, 1977, (Ordinance 18 of 1977);

**“owner”** in relation to land and premises, means the registered owner of the land or premises and includes also any person receiving the rent or profits of such land or premises from any tenant or occupier thereof, whether on his own account or as the agent for any person entitled thereto or interested therein, and in relation to a sectional title scheme, also the body corporate established in terms of the Sectional Titles Act, 1971, (Act 6 of 1971), and in relation to any vehicle it bears its ordinary meaning, and in the case of a deceased or insolvent estate, it shall also include the executor or trustee respectively;

**“service”** means a fire brigade service established in terms of subsection 2 of the Ordinance or deemed to have been established in terms of that section read with section 20 of that Ordinance.

### **Organisation of Service**

2. (1) The chief fire officer may exercise control over any fire fighting organisation and any fire appliance which is at the scene of a fire whether owned by the council or by any other person, and he shall be entitled to make such use of any fireman, volunteer and any fire appliance and other apparatus as he thinks fit.
- (2) The service may be divided into such sections as the council may determine and each section shall be under the control of an official appointed by the council or by the person appointed in terms of section 3(1) of the Ordinance is such power is delegated to him.

### **Duty to Assist**

2. Any member of a fire brigade service or fire service organisation whether it is controlled by the council or not, shall when called upon to do so by the officer, render all assistance in his power in connection with the combating or containing of a fire or any other emergency situation.]

### **Procedure on the Outbreak of Fire**

4. (1) Where the service has been notified of or there is reason to believe that an

outbreak of fire or other situation has occurred where the services of the service are required, the chief fire officer shall, together with such personnel and appliances as he thinks necessary, forthwith proceed to the place where the fire or other situation is taking place or where he has reason to believe that it is taking place.

- (2) The chief fire officer may assume command of, or interfere with, or put a stop to any existing situation or any operation being conducted in respect of a fire by any person not employed in the service, including the owner of the premises and his employee or agent and no person shall fail to comply with any order or direction given by the chief fire officer in pursuance of this subsection.

#### **Closing of Streets**

5. (1) The chief fire officer or any traffic officer or any member of a police force may close off any street, passage or place for as long as he deems necessary for the effective fighting of a fire or dealing with any emergency situation.
- (2) Any person ordered to leave an area closed off in terms of subsection (1), shall forthwith obey such order.

#### **Obstruction and Damage**

6. (1) No person shall interfere with, or hinder any official of the service, or any traffic officer or member of a police force or other person acting under the orders of such official, officer, or member in the execution of his duties under these by-laws or the Ordinance.
- (2) No person shall wilfully or negligently drive a vehicle over any hose, or damage, tamper with or interfere with any such hose or any appliance or apparatus of the service.

#### **Wearing of Uniform and Insignia**

7. (1) Where the service is subsidised in terms of section 2(2) of the Ordinance, the chief fire officer and every member of the service shall wear any uniform, rank markings and insignia prescribed by the Administrator in terms of that section.
- (2) No person other than a member of the service shall wear a uniform of the service or wear any uniform intended to convey the impression that he is such a member, or in any other manner represent himself to be a member of the service.

#### **Combustible Material**

8. (1) Where the chief fire officer is of the opinion that any person: -
  - (a) stores or causes or permits to be stored, whether inside or outside any building any timber, packaging cases, forage, straw or other combustible material in such quantities or in such a position or in such manner as to create a danger of fire to any building; or
  - (b) in occupation or control of any premises permits any trees, bushes, weeds, grass or other vegetation to grow on such premises, or any rubbish to accumulate thereon in such a manner or in such quantities as to create a danger of fire to any building or any premises;

the chief fire officer may by notice in writing require such person or the owner or occupier or the person in charge of the premises to remove the said combustible material or grass, weeds, trees, other vegetation or rubbish, or to take such other reasonable steps to remove the danger of fire as he may prescribe in such notice by a specified date.

- (2) Where there has been no compliance with the requirements of the notice the chief fire officer may take such steps, as he deems necessary to remove such danger and the person to whom the notice was directed thereof shall pay the cost to the council.

### **Safety of Premises and Buildings**

9. (1) The chief fire officer may, whenever he deems it necessary and at any time, which in his opinion, is reasonable in the circumstances: -
- (a) enter any land, premises or building and inspect: -
    - (i) such land, premises or building for the purpose of ascertaining whether any condition exists which may cause a fire or emergency situation, or which may increase the danger of, or contribute towards the spread of fire, or the creation of an emergency situation, or jeopardise or obstruct the escape of people to a place of safety.
    - (ii) Any fire-alarm, sprinkler system or other fire-fighting or fire-detecting appliance;
    - (iii) Any manufacturing process involving the danger of fire or explosion;
    - (iv) The method of storing of any flammable gas, chemicals, oils, explosives, fireworks or any hazardous substance; and
    - (v) Any installation making use of the substances referred to in subparagraph; and
  - (b) give such directions, as he may deem necessary for lowering the risk of fire or for the protection of life and property.
- (2) Where the chief fire officer finds on any premises: -
- (a) any flammable, combustible or explosive matter is so stored or used as to increase the risk of fire or the danger to life or property;
  - (b) any situation, or practise existing, which in his opinion is likely to cause or increase such danger or is likely to interfere with the operation of the service or the escape of persons to a place of safety; or
  - (c) any defective, interior or an insufficient number of fire appliances,
- he shall subject to the provisions of subsection (3), direct the owner or occupier of such land, premises or building to forthwith take such steps as he may deem expedient for the elimination of the danger.
- (3) should the chief fire officer find in any building or on any premises: -
- (a) any obstruction on or in any fire-escape, staircase, passage, doorway or window; or

- (b) a fire-escape or means of escape which, in his opinion would, in the event of fire be inadequate for the escape to a place of safety of the number of persons likely to be in such building or premises at any time; or
- (c) any other object or condition of a structural nature or otherwise, which, in his opinion, may increase the risk of fire or the danger to life or property; or
- (d) that a fire-alarm or other communication system is required,

the chief fire officer shall notify the owner or occupier of such building in writing of his findings and require of him to take such steps at such owner or occupier's own cost to rectify the irregularity within such time as is, stated in such notice.

- (4) Where the owner or occupier fails or refuses to comply within a reasonable time with a direction in terms of subsection (2), or to implement the requirements of a notice in terms of subsection (3) within the time specified in such notice, the council may take such steps as are, in the opinion of the chief fire officer, necessary to remove such risk or danger and the council may recover from such owner or occupier any expenditure incurred thereby.

**Exits**

- 10. Every door which affords an escape route from a public building to a place of safety shall be kept unlocked and shall be clearly indicated with approved exit signs: Provided that such door may be locked by means of an approved device installed in such a manner as to enable such door at all times to be opened from the inside of such building.

**Gas-filled Devices**

- 11. (1) No person shall fill any balloon, toy or other device with flammable gas without the written permission of the chief fire officer, who may impose such conditions as he may require having regard to all the circumstances of the case: Provided that such permission shall only be granted after the person concerned has furnished the council with an indemnity in the form set out in the appropriate Schedule hereto.
- (2) No person shall keep, store, use or display or permit to be kept, used, stored or displayed any balloon, toy other device filled with flammable gas on or in any land, building or premises to which the public has access or which is used as a club or any place of assembly.
- (3) Nothing in this section contained shall be so construed as to prevent the use of balloons filled with hydrogen for meteorological or other bona fide scientific or educational purposes.

**Making of Fires**

- 12. (1) No person shall make a fire, or cause, or permit a fire to be made in such a place or in such a manner as to endanger any building, premises or property.
- (2) Subject to the provisions of any other law, no person shall, without the written permission of the chief fire officer, burn any rubbish, wood, straw, or other material in the open air or cause or permit it to be done, except for the purpose of preparing food.

- (3) Any permission granted in terms of subsection (2) shall be subject to such conditions as are imposed by the chief fire officer.

#### **Fires in Chimneys, Flues and Ducts**

13. No owner or occupier of a building shall wilfully or negligently allow soot or any other combustible substance to accumulate in any chimney, flue or duct of such building in such quantities or in such manner as to create a danger of fire.

#### **Attendance of Fireman**

14. (1) If at any meeting held at a place of entertainment or recreation, excluding the showing of films at licensed cinemas or a performance in a theatre, one hundred or more persons are likely to be present, the persons convening such meeting, shall deliver a notice in writing to the chief fire officer not less than 48 hours before any such meeting takes place, stating the time when and premises where such meeting will take place.
- (2) Where in the opinion of the chief fire officer, the presence of a fireman is necessary on the grounds of safety, he may provide one or more firemen to be in attendance at any premises during the whole or part of any entertainment, recreation, meeting or other event.
- (3) The person in control of such entertainment, recreation, meeting or other event shall pay to the Council the charges set out in the appropriate Schedule hereto.

#### **Removal of Liquid or Other Substances**

15. The chief fire officer may at the request of the owner or occupier of any premises pump or otherwise remove any liquid or other substance, from such premises, subject to payment of the charges set out in the appropriate Schedule hereto.

#### **Payment for Attendance and Service**

16. (1) Subject to the provisions of section 17, the owner or occupier of land or premises, or both such owner and occupier jointly and severally, or the owner of a vehicle, as the case may be, in connection with which the attendance of the service was requested or any services of the service was rendered, shall pay to the council the charges determined by the chief fire officer to be due in accordance with the charges set out in the appropriate Schedule hereto for such attendance or service, including the use and supply of water, chemicals, equipment and other means.
- (2) (a) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (1), the chief fire officer may assess the whole or portion only of the charges contemplated in subsection (1): Provided that such portion shall not be more than ninety per cent lower than the aggregate of the charges which would have been payable in terms of subsection (7): Provided further that in assessing such charges or portion thereof, due regard shall, amongst other relevant factors, be had to: -
- (i) the fact that the amount so assessed shall be commensurate with the service rendered:
  - (ii) the manner and place of origin of the fire; and
  - (iii) the loss, which may have been caused by the fire to the person liable to pay the charges, if the services of the service, had not been rendered.

- (b) Where charges are assessed in terms of paragraph (a) and the person liable to pay such charges is dissatisfied with such assessment, he may lodge an appeal with the Administrator in the manner provided for in section (1) of the Ordinance.
- (d) An appeal in terms of paragraph (b) shall be lodged by forwarding within 14 days after receipt of an account for the assessed charges a notice of appeal, be registered post to the Director of Local Government, and by forwarding by registered post a copy of such notice to the chief fire officer, who shall forward his comments thereon to the said Director within 14 days of the receipt of such copy.

**Exemption from Payment of Charges**

17. Notwithstanding the provisions of section 16, no charges shall be payable where: -
- (a) a false alarm has been given in good faith;
  - (b) the services were required as a result of civil commotion, riot or natural disaster;
  - (c) the services were rendered in the interest of public safety;
  - (d) the chief fire officer is of the opinion that the services were of a purely humanitarian nature or were rendered solely for the saving of life;
  - (e) the owner of a vehicle furnishes proof to the satisfaction of the chief fire officer that such vehicle was stolen and that it had not been recovered by him at the time when the services of the service were rendered in respect thereof;
  - (f) any person, including the State, has entered into an agreement with the council in terms of section 14 of the Ordinance whereby the services of the service are made available to such person against payment as determined in such agreement.

**False Information**

18. No person shall wilfully give to any member of the service any notice or furnish any information relating to an outbreak of fire or any other emergency situation requiring the attendance of the service and which to his knowledge is false or inaccurate. Such person shall, notwithstanding the provisions of section 17 be liable to pay the turning out charge prescribed in the appropriate Schedule hereto.

**Telephones, Fire Alarms and Other Apparatus**

19. (1) The council may affix to or remove from any building, wall, fence or other structure any telephone, fire-alarm or other apparatus for the transmission of calls relating to fire as well as any notice indicating the nearest fire-hydrant or other fire fighting equipment.
- (2) No person shall move, remove, deface, damage or interfere with anything affixed in terms of subsection (1).

**Offences and Penalties**

19. Any person who contravenes or fails to comply with any provision of these by-laws shall be guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding R500-00 or, in default of payment, to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months or to

both such fine and imprisonment, and in the case of a continuing offence, to a fine not exceeding R50-00 for each day on which such offence continues, subject to a maximum fine of R500-00.

**SCHEDULE**

Form of Indemnity in terms of section 11(1) of the Fire Brigade By-laws.

**INDEMNITY**

In consideration of the permission to be granted to me by the Chief Fire Officer of

\_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ (date) to inflate certain

balloons, toys or other devices as specified therein, I, the undersigned \_\_\_\_\_

hereby indemnify and safeguard against loss the \_\_\_\_\_ City / Town Council and all its employees against all actions, suits, proceedings, claims, demands, costs and expenses whatsoever which may be taken or made against it or be incurred or become payable by it arising out of or in connection with any damage, death or injury caused or alleged to have been caused by or as a result of such inflation, or by the use or mere possession by any person of any of the said toys, balloons or devices.

Signed at ..... on this ..... day of .....20 ...

.....  
Applicant

Witnesses:

- 1. ....
- 2. ....