

**CHAPTER 22:02**

**FIRE SERVICE ACT**

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SCHEDULE—Fire Service Units.

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FIRE SERVICE ACT

7 of 1957      **An Act to provide for the establishment of the Guyana Fire Service and for purposes connected therewith.**

[30TH MARCH, 1957]

Short title.      **1.** This Act may be cited as the Fire Service Act.

Interpretation.      **2.** In this Act—

[24 of 1969  
25 of 1973]

“auxiliary member” means a member of the Service other than a regular member;

“fire-fighting purposes” means the purposes of the extinction of fires and the protection of life and property in case of fire;

“fireman” means a member of the Service below the rank of leading fireman;

“local authority” means in relation to the city of Georgetown and the town of New Amsterdam the Georgetown City Council and the New Amsterdam Town Council, respectively, in relation to any town or local government district established under the Municipal and District Councils Act, the council of such town or district, and, in relation to any other area, the local authority, if any, of that area within the meaning of the Local Government Act;

c. 28:02

“officer” means a member of the Service holding a rank senior to that of sub-officer;

c. 16:01

“Police Force” means the Police Force established under the Police Act;

“regular member” means a member of the Service liable for whole-time service therein;

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“regulations” means regulations made under this Act;

“the Service” means the Guyana Fire Service established by section 3;

“subordinate fire officer” means a member of the Service, other than a fireman, below the rank of station officer and includes a member of the Service of the rank of sub-officer, section leader or leading fireman;

“unit” means a unit of the Service constituted in accordance with this Act.

**3.** (1) There is hereby established in and for Guyana, with effect from the 12th October, 1957, a fire service to be called the Guyana Fire Service.

Establishment of the Service. [O. 43/1957]

(2) The Service may be composed of one or more units constituted in accordance with this Act.

**4.** (1) Units of the Service under the respective designations described in the Schedule shall be constituted in respect of the areas of Guyana described in the Schedule and shall be maintained primarily for fire-fighting purposes in such areas.

Constitution of units of Service. Schedule.

(2) The Minister may by order from time to time amend the Schedule.

**5.** The Minister may authorise the payment out of moneys provided by Parliament of such sums of money as may be necessary for defraying the cost of maintaining the Service.

Maintenance of Service out of public moneys. [4 of 1972]

**6.** (1) Anything in section 5 to the contrary notwithstanding a portion of the total cost of maintaining any unit shall be borne by the local authority or local authorities as the case may be of the area in respect of which the unit is primarily maintained.

Contributions by local authorities.

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(2) The contribution to be made by a local authority towards the maintenance of any unit under the preceding subsection shall be determined by the Minister after consultation with the local authority or local authorities concerned, and shall be deemed to be expenditure which the local authority is by law authorised to incur.

Types of members of Service.

**7.** The Service may be composed of regular members or of auxiliary members or of both regular and auxiliary members.

Composition of Service.

**8.** The Service shall consist of a Chief Fire Officer, a Deputy Chief Fire Officer and such number of officers, subordinate fire officers and firemen as the Minister may from time to time direct.

Members of Police Force deemed to be appointed members of Service.

**9.** Any person who being a member of the Police Force is on the appointed day serving with the Georgetown Fire Service Unit or the New Amsterdam Fire Service Unit shall be deemed to be appointed a member of the Service under this Act with such designation of rank as may be assigned to him.

Members of Georgetown Auxiliary Fire Service.

**10.** Any person who is immediately before the appointed day a member of the Georgetown Auxiliary Fire Brigade shall on the appointed day, be deemed to be appointed an auxiliary member of the Service under this Act with such designation of rank as may be assigned to him.

Pensions and gratuities of members of the Service.  
c. 27:02

**11.** Regular members of the Service recruited thereto on or after the appointed day and members of the Police Force deemed to be appointed members of the Service under section 9 of this Act to whom the provisions of the Pensions Act would not otherwise apply or continue to apply shall be eligible or shall continue to be eligible as the case may be for pensions and gratuities at the same rates and on the same terms and conditions as are applicable to non-commissioned officers and constables of the Police Force enrolled after the first day of September, nineteen hundred and fifty, and such pensions and gratuities shall be computed as though service in the Service were service in the Police Force.

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**12.** (1) The Chief Fire Officer shall, subject to the general order and direction of the Minister have the command and superintendence of the Service and he shall be responsible to the Minister for the efficient conduct and administration of the Service and for the proper expenditure of all public moneys appropriated for the service thereof.

Authority and responsibilities of Chief Fire Officer.  
[19 of 1954  
26 of 1959  
4 of 1972]

(2) It shall be the duty of the Chief Fire Officer—

(a) to carry out all necessary measures to ensure the proper discipline of the Service;

(b) to see that the fire-engines, fire-boats and other fire equipment are kept in good order and thorough repair and are used to the best advantage for fire-fighting purposes;

(c) to take cognizance of and to cause prosecutions to be instituted either in his own name or in the name of any officer or subordinate officer of the Service in respect of offences under the Fire Prevention Act or any other law for the prevention of fire;

c. 22:01

(d) at the close of every financial year, or oftener if required by the Minister, to report to him in writing the condition of the stations, hydrants, hoses, vehicles, fire-boats, fire-engines, and all other fire equipment and property under his charge; the income and expenditure of the Service in detail for the previous year; the number of fires and causes thereof, or as near as can be ascertained; the number and description of buildings destroyed or seriously damaged, together with the names of the owners or occupants, all accidents by fire which may be known to him; together with such other information or suggestions as may in his opinion be desirable.

(3) The Chief Fire Officer shall have his headquarters in the city of Georgetown.

**13.** The Deputy Chief Fire Officer shall act as principal assistant to the Chief Fire Officer in the performance of his duties in respect of the Service, and shall have power, during the absence or incapacity of the Chief Fire Officer, or when authorised by him, to do or suffer any act or thing which may by law be done or suffered by the Chief Fire Officer.

Duties of Deputy Chief Fire Officer.

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Duties of  
members of  
Service.

**14.** (1) The officers of the Service shall perform such duties of the Chief Fire Officer as may be legally delegated to them and all such duties as devolve upon them under the regulations.

(2) The subordinate fire officers and firemen of the Service shall perform such duties as devolve upon them under the regulations and such other duties as the Chief Fire Officer may determine.

Call out of  
auxiliary  
members.

**15.** It shall be lawful for the Chief Fire Officer in any case where in his opinion additional assistance is required for fire-fighting purposes to call out for service any auxiliary members of the Service and unless the context otherwise requires the provisions of this Act and of the regulations with respect to the powers, immunities, duties and obligations of members of the Service shall in relation to auxiliary members apply only to such members as are called out as aforesaid.

Illness, bodily  
injury and  
death of  
auxiliary  
members.  
[4 of 1972]

**16.** (1) Where any auxiliary member of the Service through no fault of his own, contracts any illness, or sustains bodily injury while in the actual discharge of his duties as such, he shall be provided with medicines, medical comforts and medical attendance at the public expense on the written authority of the Chief Fire Officer.

(2) Where any auxiliary member of the Service sustains bodily injury in the circumstances specified in the preceding subsection, and is permanently disabled (either totally or partially) as a result thereof, the Minister responsible for finance may grant him a pension or gratuity, the amount of which shall be subject to the approval of the National Assembly.

(3) Where any auxiliary member of the Service as a result of the actual discharge of his duties as such and through no fault of his own contracts any illness or sustains any bodily injury and due to such illness or bodily injury suffers any loss of earnings in his normal occupation, the Minister responsible for finance may grant him compensation therefor, the amount of which shall be subject to the approval of the National Assembly.

(4) Where the aforesaid bodily injury results in death, the Minister responsible for finance may award to the dependants (including any illegitimate children to whose support the deceased was contributing) a pension or gratuity, the amount of which shall be subject to the approval of the National Assembly.

(5) This section shall apply to an auxiliary member notwithstanding the fact that by reason of his injury or death he or his dependants as defined under the National Insurance and Social Security Act are entitled to benefits under that Act.

c. 36:01

**17.** (1) Any member of the Service who is on duty, or any member of the Police Force may enter and if necessary break into any premises or place in which fire has or is reasonably believed to have broken out, or any premises or place which it is necessary to enter for the purposes of extinguishing a fire or of protecting the premises or place from acts done for fire-fighting purposes, without the consent of the owner or occupier thereof, and may do all such things as he may deem necessary for extinguishing the fire or for protecting from fire, or from acts done as aforesaid, any such premises or place or for rescuing any person or property therein.

Rights of entry for fire-fighting purposes.

**18.** At any fire, the senior member of the Service present shall have the sole charge and control of all operations for the extinction of the fire, including the fixing of positions of fire engines and apparatus, the attaching of hose to any water pipes or the use of any water supply, and the selection of the parts of the premises, object or place where the fire is, or of adjoining premises, objects or places, against which the water is to be directed.

Control of operations at a fire.

**19.** On the occasion of a fire the Chief Fire Officer or other member of the Service in charge may in his discretion—

Powers of person in control of operations at a fire.

(a) take the command of other persons who may voluntarily place their services at his disposal;

(b) remove or order any member of the Service to remove any person who by his presence interferes with or obstructs the operations of the Service;

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(c) employ persons to aid in extinguishing any fire or in removing furniture or goods from any building on fire or in danger of fire, or to guard and secure the same;

(d) cause any water to be shut off from the mains and pipes of any district in order to give a greater supply and pressure of water in the district in which a fire may break out;

(e) generally, take any measures that may appear expedient for the protection of life and property.

Power to destroy property in order to arrest spread of fire.

**20.** On the occasion of a fire the Chief Fire Officer or other member of the Service in charge is hereby empowered if it appears to him necessary for the purpose of arresting the progress of any fire, to order any house or other building, paling or erection to be pulled down or otherwise destroyed, and he is also empowered to use any water in any tank, cistern or other vessel or receptacle in the neighbourhood of the fire; and no action for damages in respect of anything so done shall be maintainable against the Chief Fire Officer or other member of the Service in charge or against anyone acting by his authority.

Closing of streets at a fire.

**21.** The senior officer of the Police Force present at any fire, or in the absence of any such officer the senior member of the Service present, may close to traffic any street or may stop or regulate the traffic in any street whenever in the opinion of that officer or member as the case may be it is necessary or desirable to do so for fire-fighting purposes.

Duties and immunities of water undertakers.

**22.** Any water undertakers shall, on being required by any such member of the Service as is mentioned in section 19 to provide a greater supply and pressure of water for extinguishing a fire, take all necessary steps to enable them to comply with such requirement and may for that purpose shut off the water from the mains and pipes in any area; and no authority or person shall be liable to any penalty or claim by reason of the interruption of the supply of water occasioned only by compliance of the water undertakers with such a requirement.

Immunities of members of Service.

**23.** No member of the Service acting *bona fide* in the exercise of the powers conferred upon him under this Act shall be liable for any damage or for any act done under this Act.



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- 24.** Any person who wilfully obstructs or interferes with any member of the Service who is engaged in operations for fire-fighting purposes shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine of nineteen thousand five hundred dollars and to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three months.
- Interference with Service.  
[6 of 1997]
- 25.** Any person who knowingly gives or causes to be given a false alarm of fire to the Service or to any unit or member thereof, shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine of twenty-six thousand dollars or to imprisonment for six months, and in the case of a second or subsequent conviction to a fine of forty-eight thousand seven hundred and fifty dollars and to imprisonment for twelve months.
- False alarms of fire.  
[24 of 1962  
6 of 1997]
- 26.** Any person who on the occasion of a fire, or with intent to exercise any power conferred by this Act on a member of the Service, impersonates or in any way pretends to be a member of the Service, shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine of nineteen thousand five hundred dollars and to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three months.
- Impersonating member of Service.  
[6 of 1997]
- 27.** Any member of the Service who neglects or refuses to serve or refuses to obey any lawful command, shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine of nine thousand seven hundred and fifty dollars.
- Insubordination.  
[6 of 1997]
- 28.** The Minister may from time to time make regulations relating to all or any of the following matters:
- Regulations.  
[4 of 1972]
- (a) the admission of members into the Service, and the period of service and training of the men belonging to the same;
  - (b) the scale of issue, and the type of uniform to be worn by, the hours of training and exercise of, and the distribution of duties among, the members of the Service;
  - (c) the speedy attendance of members of the Service with engines, fire escapes, fire-boats and all necessary equipment on the occasion of any alarm of fire;

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(d) for the attendance of members of the Service with or without engines, fire escapes, fire-boats and all necessary equipment on the occasion of any call for the special services of the Service;

(e) the maintenance of the Service in a due state of efficiency;

(f) the hours of duty and leave of absence of members of the Service;

(g) the ranks, pay, and allowances of members of the Service;

(h) generally for the better carrying out of the provisions of this Act.

s. 4  
[4 of 1972]

SCHEDULE

FIRE SERVICE UNITS

	Names	Areas
1.	Georgetown Fire Service Unit.	The City of Georgetown.
2.	New Amsterdam Fire Service Unit.	The Town of New Amsterdam.
3.	Timehri Fire Service Unit.	The area bounded as follows:  On the North: by the Kakabura Trench; On the South: by the sideline trench between Timehri and Plantation Alliance; On the East: by the Soesdyke-Linden Highway;

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Names	Areas
4. The Linden Fire Service Unit.	On the West: by the Demerara River, all boundaries being shown on a plan dated 18th March, 1966 and on record in the Lands Department as Plan No. 119, 911B. The Town of Linden as defined by clause 2 of the Linden Town (Constitution) Order 1970 (No. 29 of 1970).

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