

Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Public Statement of the
Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service
In Compliance with Section 7, 8 and 9 of
The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 1999

In accordance with Section 7, 8 and 9 of the Freedom of Information Act, 1999 (FOIA) the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service is required by law to publish the following statements which lists the documents and information generally available to the public.

The following information is published by the TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO FIRE SERVICE as approved by the Ministry of National Security.

The Act gives members of the public:

- (1) A legal right for each person to access information held by the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service;
- (2) A legal right for each person to have official information relating to him/herself amended where it is incomplete, incorrect or misleading;
- (3) A legal right to obtain reasons for adverse decisions made regarding an applicant's request for information under the FOIA;
- (4) A legal right to complain to the Ombudsman and to apply to the High Court for Judicial Review to challenge adverse decisions made under the FOIA.

Section 7 Statements

Section 7 (1) (a) (i):

Function and Structure of the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service is:

“To provide Efficient and Effective Public Fire Protection and Emergency Services to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.”

Motto:

‘In the Service of the People’

Vision:

- (1) To forge a new identity for the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service as the primary organization of motivated professionals, responsible for fire and civil defense; and to expand our roles as first responders in all related activities by the acquisition and utilization of modern technology and equipment.
- (2) To strive for the establishment of an adequate legal framework to promote our functions in a changing society.
- (3) To develop an internationally recognized Fire Service training institution.

The Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service came into being as a separate entity from the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service on January 1, 1951 and is a department under the auspices of the Ministry of National Security. The Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service was established in accordance with an Act of Parliament, Chapter 35:50 in the Revised Laws of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. Its Administrative Headquarters is located at Wrightson Road, Port of Spain. It comprises a staff of 1,575 professional, inclusive of 89 females plus 759 auxiliary personnel and is headed by Chief Fire Officer Lennox K. Alfred, BSc., MBA, MIFireE.

The Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service consist of two (2) Divisions, namely the First Division and Second Division. Based on its ranking system, the department possesses a pyramidal organization structure. This document is available for viewing.

The First Division includes offices specified in the Second Schedule and such offices as the President may, by Order prescribe.

SECOND SCHEDULE

Officers in the First Division of the Fire Service

Chief Fire Officer

Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Assistant Chief Fire Officer

Divisional Fire Officer

Assistant Divisional Fire Officer

The Second Division includes the offices specified in the Third Schedule and such offices as the President may, by Order, prescribe.

THIRD SCHEDULE

Officers in the Second Division of the Fire Service

Fire Station Officer

Fire Sub Station Officer

Fire Sub Officer

Firefighter

Apprentices

In accordance with Cabinet Minute No 192 of December, 1995 the geographical divisional boundaries of the Fire Service were changed.

The Northern Division consists of eleven (11) stations under the operation and administrative command of an Assistant Chief Fire Officer. The divisional boundaries encompass the entire East/West Corridor from Chaguaramas in the west to Toco in the east – this is the largest division in the Fire Service.

The Central Division consists of three (3) stations under the operational and administrative command of an Assistant Chief Fire Officers. Its boundaries encompass the entire central plains.

The Tobago Division consists of three (3) stations under the operational and administrative command of an Assistant Chief Fire Officer.

The Southern Division consists of six (6) stations under the operational and administrative command of an Assistant Chief Fire Officer. The divisional boundaries encompass the entire southern area.

Effects of Functions on Members of the Public

The primary responsibility of the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service is outlined in Section 35 of the Fire Service Act Chapter 35:50 and its related amendment No. 10 of 1997 Section 5-3A. The objectives of the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service are:

- a) to save and protect life or property from damage or destruction by fire or other hazards, whether fire related or not;
- b) to provide and advise upon, preventative measures against the occurrence of such damage or destruction;
- c) to render humanitarian services where required; and
- d) to conduct investigations in order to ascertain the cause or origin of a fire, or other hazards requiring the services of the Fire Service.

Section 7 (a) (ii):

Categories of Documents in the possession of the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service.

1. Personnel files, which detail all staff appointments, job applications, job specifications, promotions, transfers, resignations, deaths, retirement, leave, vacation, etc.
2. Files dealing with the accounting and financial management function of the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service.

3. Financial Records (cheques, vouchers, receipts, journals, etc.)
4. Files dealing with matters relating to the procurement of supplies, services and equipment.
5. Maps/Charts/Photographs/Diskettes/Abstracts/Tapes
6. News Releases, speeches originating in the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service.
7. Policy and Procedure Documents.
8. Internal and External correspondence files.
9. Customer files.
10. Documents relating to strategic review of the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service, Information Technology Strategy and Training Plans.
11. Legislation and Legal Instructions.
12. Legal Opinion and related matters.
13. Files dealing with local and foreign training.
14. Minutes/Agenda of meetings.
15. Files dealing with Fire Service publications including Circulars, Notices, Orders, Memoranda, Bulletins, etc.
16. Reports: Statistical, Annual/Monthly/Quarterly, Valuation and Accidents.
17. Books, booklets, leaflets, pamphlets, posters, newspaper clipping.
18. Files dealing with official functions, conferences and events hosted and attended by the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service.
19. Inventories.
20. Periodicals and publications.
21. Complaint files.
22. Registers/Certificates/Permit.
23. Handbook, summaries, etc
24. Standards
25. Job Descriptions
26. Job specifications
27. Annual Training Programmes
28. Recruit Policy document

29. In-Service Training Policy
30. Strategic Review of the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service

Section 7 (1) (a) (iii):

Material Prepared for Publication or Inspection

Brochures, Leaflets and Handouts on Fire Prevention tips.

Section 7 (1) (a) (iv):

Literature available by Subscription

This section is not applicable to the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service.

Section 7 (1) (a) (v):

Procedure to be followed when accessing a Document from the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service.

How to Request Information:

- o General – our policy to answer all requests, both oral and written, for information. However, in order to have the rights given to you by the FOIA (for example, the right to challenge a decision if your request for information is refused), you must make your request in writing. The applicant must, therefore, complete the appropriate form available at the undermentioned Divisional Headquarters, for information is not readily available to members of the public.

Northern Divisional Headquarters
Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service
Wrightson Road,
PORT OF SPAIN.

Southern Divisional Headquarters
Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service
Mon Repos Roundabout,
Bye Pass,
SAN FERNANDO.

Central Divisional Headquarters
Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service
Sookhai Boulevard,
CHAGUANAS.

Tobago Divisional Headquarters
Scarborough Fire Station
Bacolet Street,
TOBAGO.

- Addressing Requests. – To facilitate prompt handling of your request, please address it to the Designated Officer of the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service. [See **Section 7 (1) (a) (vi)**].
- Details in the Request. – Applicants should provide details that will allow for ready identification and location of the records that are being requested. If insufficient information is provided, clarification will be sought from the applicant. If you are not sure how to write your request or what details to include, communicate with our Designated Officer.

Request not handled under the FOIA

- A request under the FOIA will not be processed to the extent that it asks for information, which is currently available to members of the public, either from the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service or from other public Authority, for example brochures and pamphlets, etc.

Responding to your Request

- Retrieving Documents. The Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service is required to furnish copies of documents only when they are in our possession or we can retrieve them

from storage. Information stored in the National Archives or another storage center, will be retrieved in order to process your request.

Prior to the commencement of the Freedom of Information Act, 1999 old records may have been destroyed. The granting of a request for such documents may, therefore be impossible. Various laws, regulations and manuals give the time periods for keeping records before they may be destroyed.

An applicant is entitled to copies of information we have in our possession, custody or power. We are required to furnish only one copy of a document. If we cannot make a legible copy of a document to be released, we may not attempt to reconstruct it. Instead, we will furnish the best copy possible and note its quality in our reply.

Please note that we are not compelled to do the following:

- a) Create new documents.
- b) Perform research for you.

Time Limits

○ General.

The FOIA sets certain time limits for us to decide whether to disclose the documents you have requested. If we fail to meet the deadlines, the FOIA gives you the right to proceed as if your request has been denied. We will try diligently to comply with the time limits, but if it appears that processing your request may take longer than the statutory limit, we will acknowledge your request and advise you of its status. Since there is a possibility that requests may be misaddressed or misrouted, you may wish to call or write to confirm that we have received the request and to ascertain its status.

○ Time Allowed.

We will determine whether to grant your request for access to information as soon as practicable but no later than 30 days as required by Section 15 of the FOIA. If a

decision is taken to grant access to the information requested, you will be permitted to inspect the documents or be provided with copies, if you so request.

o Fees and Refunds.

The Freedom of Information Fees and Charges Regulations prescribe the fees related to the search, retrieval and provision of documents. You are entitled to receive the document/s within seven days of payment of the relevant fees. If we fail to provide the information within the seven days period you are entitled to a refund of the fees paid in addition to access to the document/s requested.

Section 7 (1) (a) (vi):

Officers in the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service Responsible for:

- 1) The initial receipt of and action upon notices under **Section 10**,
- 2) Requests for access to documents under **Section 13**, and
- 3) Application for correction of Personal Information under **Section 36** of the FOIA.

THE DESIGNATED OFFICER IS:	Job Title	: Fire Station Officer
		Public Relations, Welfare and Research
	Name	: <i>John Springle</i>
	Address (work)	: Northern Divisional Headquarters, Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service Wrightson Road, Port of Spain.
	Tel/Fax numbers	: 623-8463 or 625-2481
	E-mail address	: lkalfred@tstt.net.tt
THE ALTERNATE OFFICER IS:	Job Title	: Divisional Fire Officer
	Name	: <i>Alfred Maraj</i>
	Address (work)	: Northern Divisional Headquarters Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service Wrightson Road,

Port of Spain

Tel/Fax numbers : 623-8463 or 625-2481

E-mail address : lkalfred@tstt.net.tt

Section 7 (1) (a) (vii):

Advisory Boards, Councils, Committees and other bodies (Meetings/minutes are open to the public.)

Delegates of the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service sits on the following committees:

- Bureau of Standards
- Storage Committee – Ministry of Energy
- Approval Committee of Development Projects – Town and country Planning Division
- Special Committee – Tourism and Development
- Special Committee – Codes and Standards for the building industry
- National Carnival Committee (N.C.C.)
- National Emergency Management Agency (N.E.M.A.)
- Trinidad and Tobago emergency Mutual Aid (T.T.M.A.S.)
- Port of Spain City council
- Water and Sewerage Authority (W.A.S.A.)
- Community Awareness and Emergency Response (C.A.R.E.)
- E-999 Committee
- Fire Advisory Committee (in collaboration with the Forestry Division)

Section 7 (1) (a) (viii):

Library/Reading Room Facilities

No formal seating accommodations are available throughout the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service as it pertains to Reading Room Facilities. But, at the Chaguanas Fire Station, Library and Reading Room Facilities are available.

Section 8 Statements

This section is not applicable to the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service.

Section 9 Statements

This section is not applicable to the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service.