



# BARBADOS FIRE SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT

2016



**PREPARED BY: RESEARCH & PLANNING UNIT**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Progress, Productivity and Prevention are the benchmarks that the members of the Barbados Fire Service (BFS) sought to achieve throughout the year 2016, as the department maintains its promise to the public of Barbados to provide excellent service whenever called upon. The 2016 Annual Report showcases the many activities carried out by the dedicated members of the Department inclusive of training, emergency response and humanitarian services. It features challenges that would have been encountered as a department during the recorded year.

The Department said farwell to a total of seven persons from within its ranks over the year 2016. It is always unfortunate when an establishment loses personnel, as it brings to an end the knowledge and skills that were unique to the officer that leaves. Of the seven persons who retired, five were due to medical reasons and two reached retirement level. The Department, unfortunately, lost one of its active members to death.

Several accomplishments were achieved and celebrated during the year 2016:

- The Chief Fire Officer was officially appointed to the post after acting for a short period.
- The Training and Development Unit was renamed the Barbados Fire Academy.
- The first ever Customer Service Charter was launched.
- A new user friendly website was launched.

There were also several events of note that occurred during 2016:

- The Barbados Fire Service Association produced a fire safety handbook which was officially launched at the Bridgetown Fire Station.
- The Mansour family in association with The Rotary Club of Barbados West donated an electric Jaws of Life to the Department.
- The Department received two new fire fighting vehicles to augment its aging fleet.
- A joint simulation exercise was conducted within the Bridgetown environs showcasing the skills of the emergency services.
- An award ceremony was held in December to honour officers who were exemplary in their service throughout the year.
- A hazardous material incident took place in St. George involving an overturned gasoline tanker.
- The IABPFF held its Biennial Convention in Barbados, with the caribbean, North American and English members in attendance.

The Department realized success in reducing its emergency calls with an 8.79 % decrease in overall incidents and a 6.3 % reduction in fires specifically. In 2016 the officers responded to two thousand and ninty-six (2096) incidents inclusive of one thousand, seven hundred and eighty-eight (1788) fires compared to two thousand, two hundred and twenty-six (2226) incidents inclusive of one thousand, nine hundred and nine (1909) fires in 2015. The Service is encouraged by this reduction as it gives the assurance that the fire safety messages are not just being heard throughout the island but that the people within the given communities are heeding the advice.

The emergency categories which showed significant decreases were: Commercial Buildings fires which decreased from twenty (**20**) in **2015** to thirteen (**13**) in **2016**, Grass fires which showed a reduction from eight hundred and fifty-six (**856**) in **2015** to seven hundred and fifty-one (**751**) in **2016**, Rubbish fires stood at three hundred and sixty-three (**363**) in **2015** wheras there were three hundred and twenty-six (**326**) in **2016**; private dwelling house fires moved from eighty-three (**83**) in **2015** to eighty (**80**) in **2016** and motor vehicle accidents reduced from ninetty-four (**94**) in **2015** to seventy-seven (**77**) in **2016**.

It is hoped, by all parties involved, that these decreases will continue to be seen in all categories of emergencies as the Department will continue to train members of the public in fire safety and fire prevention.

The Fire Prevention and Code Enforcement Unit conducted several fire safety lectures, evacuation drills, fire warden training, career showcases and building inspections throughout 2016. The Units' responsibility continues to grow as the people of Barbados are becoming more aware of the need to be fire smart and are therefore calling on the services of this Unit for guidance.

The Barbados Fire Academy also assists with the training of the public with fire safety training and evacuation procedures as the demand is constantly increasing, making it impossible for the Fire Prevention and Code Enforcement Unit to manage on its own. Apart from the fire safety training, which is an external course, the Academy also held several internal courses as they ensured that the officers of this department are proficient in the skills needed to conduct their daily duties in a professional manner.

Professionalism, of course, does not end with fire officers as this trait along with discipline, self control, foot drill and water safety are among subjects taught to twenty eight young children from across the secondary schools in Barbados, who pursued the Junior Fire cadet Program.

## ESTABLISHMENT

The table below indicates both filled and vacant posts within the operational and administrative sections of the Department during 2016. It clearly denotes a significant number of vacancies at the supervisory level of Leading Fire Officer and middle management level of Sub-Officer.

Officers		Administrative Staff			Vacancy
Rank	Number of Posts	Vacancy	Post	No.	
Chief Fire Officer	1	-	Senior Executive Officer		Post Frozen
Deputy Chief Fire Officer	1	1	Accountant	1	1
Divisional Officer	3	1	Executive Officer	1	-
Station Officer	7	4	Assistant Accountant	1	1
Sub Officer	16	16	Senior Clerk	1	-
Leading Fire Officer	32	24	Clerical Officer	4	2
Fire Officer	179	8	Clerk Typist	1	1
			Stenographer Typist	1	-
			Executive Secretary	1	-
			Scrubbers	8	5
			General Worker	4	2
			Messenger	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>54</b>		<b>24</b>	<b>13</b>

**Table 1**

## PERSONNEL MATTERS

A total of seven (7) persons retired from the ranks of the Barbados Fire Service in the year 2016. This is compared to nine (9) persons in 2015, five (5) persons in 2014 and two (2) persons in 2013. These figures indicate that between the years 2013 and 2016 a total of twenty-three (23) persons retired from the Department. One (1) officer also resigned in 2015.

These persons would have played an integral role in the development and success of the Department during their tenure and would have left an indelible mark on the ones who remain.

It should be noted that a number of officers who retired in the recorded year left service due to medical reasons.

The Department also lost Fire Officer 76 Ferdinal Browne due to death.

### ***Persons who retired in 2016:***

- ❖ *Station Officer Gordon Boxill – Thirty-five years of service.*
- ❖ *Leading Fire Officer 5 Gregory Hutson – Thirty-seven years of service.*
- ❖ *Fire Officer 113 Shirley Phillips - Griffith – Twenty-seven years of service.*
- ❖ *Fire Officer 125 Delwyn Boyce – Twenty-five years of service.*
- ❖ *Fire Officer 84 Samuel Carrington – Thirty years of service.*
- ❖ *Fire Officer 118 Coswin Brathwaite – Twenty-five years of service.*
- ❖ *Fire Officer 259 Ryan Ward – Sixteen years of service.*

## CHALLENGES

### *Manpower*

One of the major challenges that the Department is dealing with is shortage of manpower. In spite of this, the current officers are doing their upmost best to maintain a safe environment for all persons who live, work and invest in this country, but it would be remiss of all persons with an interest in the Department to ignore the need for additional staff. It should be noted, however, that the department has commenced an initiative through the establishment of the Auxiliary Fire Officer Unit to curb the manpower shortage.



*Image 1: Fire officers at work*

### *Grass and Rubbish Fires*

These two categories have been problematic to the Department for an extended period of time as they account for a large portion of the total fires recorded during any given year.

In 2013 out of the twenty-one hundred and fifty-six (**2156**) fires recorded, grass and rubbish fires combined for a total of fourteen hundred and forty-five (**1445**) or **67%** of the overall number.

In 2014 the Department recorded twenty-six hundred and fifty-three fires (**2653**) rubbish and grass fires accounted for seventeen hundred and sixty-three (**1763**) or **66 %** of those fires.

In 2015, nineteen hundred and nine (**1909**) fires were recorded and twelve hundred and twenty (**1220**) or **63.90 %** of these fires were divided among grass and rubbish. It is hoped that the Departments continuing campaigns against indiscriminate burning will yield results in seeing these types of fires diminish greatly.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### *Official Appointment*



Mr. Errol Maynard was officially appointed on promotion, to the post of Chief Fire Officer, effective September 2016, after acting in the position from September of 2014. He succeeded the now Retired Chief Fire Officer Mr. Wilfred Marshall.

*Image 2: Chief Fire Officer Errol V Maynard*

### *Barbados Fire Academy*



The Training and Development Unit was renamed the Barbados Fire Academy. This change came about after years of planning to propel the Unit from a local Training Centre to a regional hub for firefighting and emergency service training. The Academy will be located at the Arch Hall Fire Station in St. Thomas. It will also be offering fire safety workshops to the business community.

*Image 3: Barbados Fire Academy Logo*



### ***Auxiliary Fire Officers***

On June 15, 2016 the Department welcomed its first batch of Auxiliary Fire Officers. Ten (10) persons; one (1) female and nine (9) males completed approximately nine weeks of training and are now functioning members within the department. These officers completed a modified training course as they would have completed the Fire Fighter I and II Programme at the Barbados Community College (BCC). The Department will be seeking to recruit additional Auxiliary Fire Officers in the near future.

### ***Customer Service Charter***

The Department launched its first customer service charter in 2016 as it saw the need to further improve its methods of service delivery to both internal and external customers. The Charter outlines what the Department will provide to its customers and what it expects from its customers in return.

### ***Website Launch***

The Fire Service has a new look website. This collaborative initiative, between the Data Processing Department and private website developers Sioure, has developed a customer friendly website to better serve the department's internal and external customers.

## EVENTS

### *Book Launch*

The Barbados Fire Service Association launched its Fire Prevention Handbook on Thursday, June 9, 2016. The initiative came about as the Association saw the need for the members of the public to have vital fire safety and prevention information that could help persons save themselves, their property and by extension their community from the ravages of fire. The book not only contains fire safety information, but also highlights the corporate partners who aptly assisted the Association with the sponsorship of the book. The Association seeks to continue partnering with their stakeholders to produce more publications in the coming years.



*Image 4: Chief Fire Officer Maynard, members of the Association and members of the Fire Prevention Unit perusing the Handbook*

### ***Equipment Donation***



The Barbados Fire Service received an invaluable piece of rescue equipment from the Rotary Club of Barbados West and the Mansour family. They donated a battery operated Hurst Jaws of Life to the Department. The rescue tool was donated to the Service as a means of bolstering the rescue capacity of the department.

***Image 5: Chief Fire Officer Maynard, members of Mansour family, Chief Ambulance Officer and a Fire Officer inspect Jaws-Of-Life***

### ***New Vehicles***

The BFS fleet was enhanced with the purchase of two fire fighting vehicles. A new Water Tender which will supplement the current fleet of aging water tenders and a multimedia fire fighting vehicle which will bolster the operational capacity in the event of an incident at the



Island's Bridgetown Port or one of the electrical or petroleum installations along the outskirts of the City. These additions are timely as the Department seeks to continuously improve its emergency response capacity and provide adequate fire coverage to Barbados' high risk areas.

***Image 6: Chief Fire Officer Maynard receiving new vehicles from Angloco representative***

### ***Simulation Exercise***

A simulation exercise was held by the Department in conjunction with the Royal Barbados Police Force, Emergency Ambulance Service and the Roving Response Team. The Simulation saw the Barbados Fire Service utilize its rescue water craft to effect a water rescue and deploy their Trailer to be used as the Command Centre. The Simulation was in keeping with the Department's mandate to continuously expose their personnel to "real life" scenarios that can occur in their line of duty on any given day.

The Exercise also enabled personnel from the participating agencies to hone their skills and to further enhance working relationships with each other to ensure efficiency when simulations of these types become realities.



***Image 7: Ambulance and Fire Service personnel attending to accident victims at simulation***



***Image 8: Fire Officers attempting to extinguish vehicle fire at simulation***

## ***Award Ceremony***



***Image 9: Recipients of the Chief Fire Officer's Award with Chief Fire Officer and Permanent Secretary***

An award ceremony was held on December 8, 2016 at the Accra Beach Hotel and Spa in honour of those officers who performed admirably over the past two (2) years. The feature address was given by the Attorney General, The Honourable Adriel Brathwaite, QC, MP and the welcome address was given by the Chief Fire Officer Mr. Errol Maynard. The Humanitarian Award was awarded to the six (6) officers who were deployed to Dominica after Tropical Storm Erika. The Pinnacle Awards were given to Retired Chief Fire Officer Wilfred Marshall and retiring Acting Deputy Chief Fire Officer Lloydson Phillips. Two Fire Officers Marlon Small and Terry Griffith received the Chief Fire Officer's Award and Ms. Natasha Forde received the Fire Officer of the Year Award. Other awards presented were for Dedication, Appreciation and Outstanding Service.



***Image 10: Recipients of Humanitarian award with Attorney General of Barbados***



***Image 11: Fire Officer of the Year Ms. Natasha Forde receiving her award from the Attorney General of Barbados***



### ***Fire Service Week***

The Barbados Fire Service held its annual church service at the Western Light Church of the Nazarene, Oxnards, St. James to mark the beginning of Fire Service Week 2016. The feature address was given by the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs Mrs. Gayle Francis - Vaughan.

The week followed on with a health extravaganza, quiz, fire officer's professional day and fun day. This week of activities often gives members of the public the opportunity to have greater interaction with fire officers as they can participate in the open days that are held at each station.

The week also gives officers the chance to unwind and participate in group building and entertaining activities, as they temporarily step away from their roles as first responders.



***Image 12: Fire Officers participating in Annual Church Service***

### ***Hazardous Material Incident***



Fire Officials responded to an overturned tanker at Constant, St. George on May 10, 2016. The accident saw Fire Officers, Police Officers and members of the Roving Response Team working together to mitigate the incident. The incident did not result in any injuries but caused the area to be cordoned off. The entire incident lasted approximately eleven (11) hours.

***Image 13: Emergency Officials at the incident scene at Constant, St. George***



***Image 14: Fire Officers stabilizing over turned tanker at Constant, St. George***



***Image 15: Tank being removed from Incident Scene***

### ***Airport Incident***



The officers at the Airport Fire Station were pressed into action on June 14, 2016 after a call for assistance was made for an arriving Air Canada flight from Toronto. The aircraft landed safely and was escorted off of the runway by fire and police officials. It was later discovered that the emergency was a Police matter which was quickly and safely dissolved.

***Image 16: Crash Tender escorting the Air Canada aircraft to a safe area on the aerodrome***

### ***IABPFF Convention***

The International Association of Black Professional Firefighters (IABPFF) held their regional



chapter convention in Barbados at the Hilton Hotel from August 6 - 12, 2016. The conference saw Fire Officers from the United States of America and the Caribbean coming together to forge new partnerships and relationships in the hope of improving the professional lives of Fire Fighters worldwide. The week of activities saw Fire Officers participate in a memorial parade, training sessions, lectures and a fun day.

***Image 17: Members of the International Association of Black Professional Firefighters parading through Bridgetown***

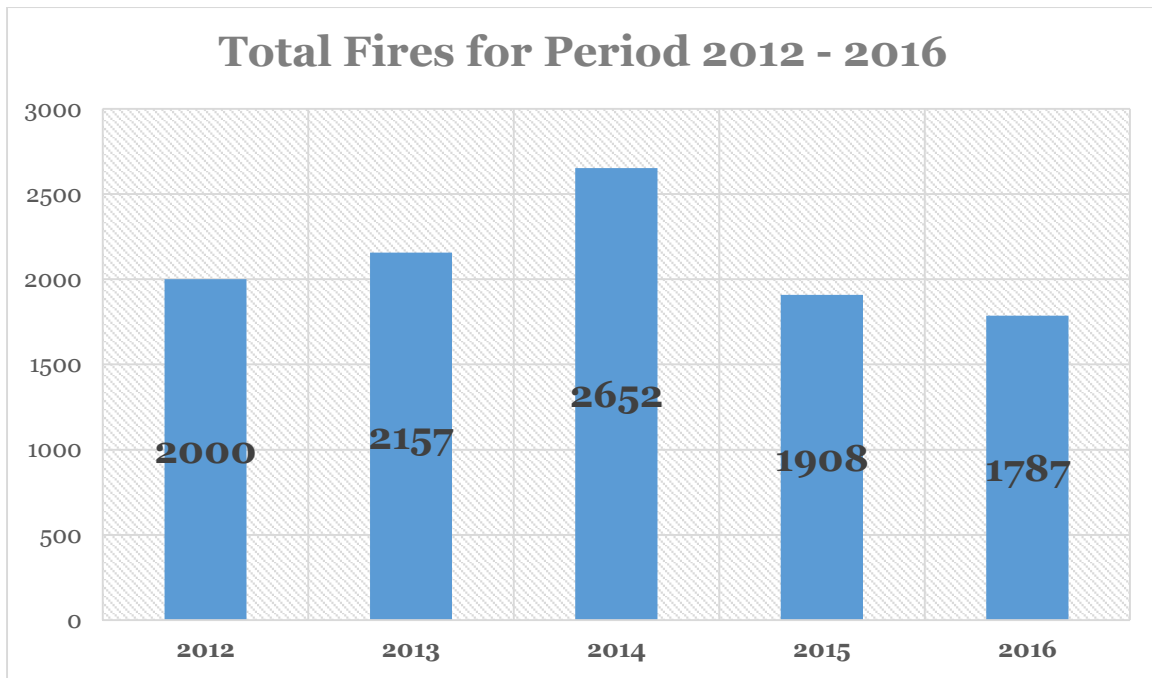


## INCIDENT ANALYSIS

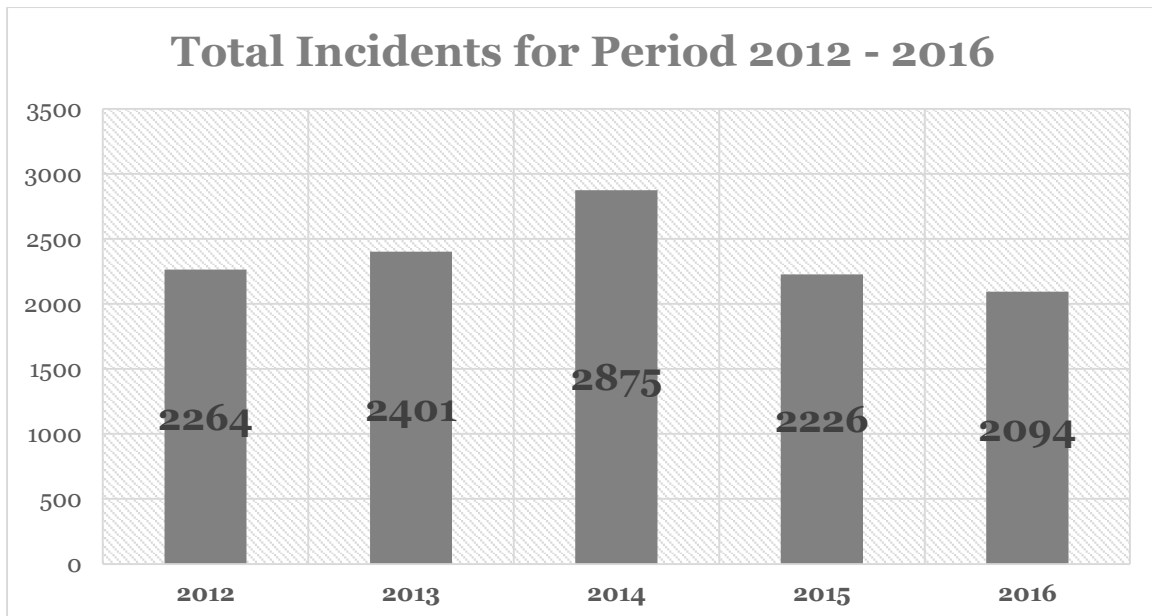
There were two thousand and ninety-four (2094) incidents recorded from January 1 to December 31, 2016, this is compared to two thousand, two hundred and twenty-six (2226) incidents in 2015. This saw overall incidents reported to the Fire Service being reduced by 8.79 %. There was also a significant reduction in fires for 2016 with seventeen hundred and eighty-seven (1787) fires being recorded – *a reduction of 6.3 %*, this is compared to nineteen hundred and eight (1908) fires in 2015. This reduction is an encouraging sign as the consensus would be that persons within the general public are heeding the fire safety and prevention advice being disseminated by the Department on a daily basis. The table below shows the number of fires recorded for the specific category.

Bagasse - 1	
Commercial Building - 13	
Derelict House - 13	
Derelict Vehicle - 2	
Electrical - 67	
False Alarm (Good Intent) - 239	
False Alarm ( Malicious) - 94	
Grass - 751	
Motor Vehicle - 49	
Motor Vessel - 1	
Other Fire - 9	
Other Structural - 33	
Private Dwelling House - 80	
Ratoon - 5	
Rubbish - 326	
Sugar Canes - 41	
Trash - 10	
Tree - 23	
Utility Pole - 30	

**Table 2: Fire Calls by Category**



*Chart 1: Total Fires by Year*



*Chart 2: Total Incidents by Year*

## **PRIVATE DWELLING HOUSE FIRES**

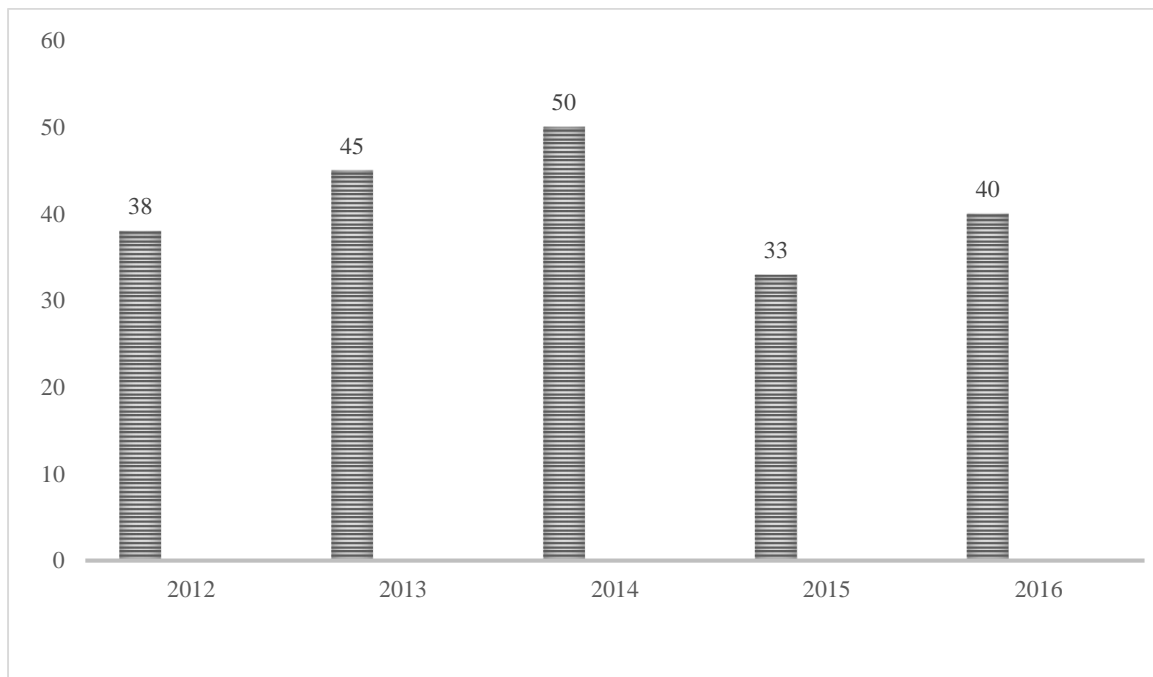
Residential fires for the year 2016 ended at eighty (80) compared to eighty-three (83) in 2015 and one hundred (100) in 2014. This is showing that there is a downward trend in the occurrences of residential fires in Barbados which is extremely encouraging to personnel at the Barbados Fire Service. This trend is in keeping with the Department's strategic goals to improve fire and life safety programmes, and to increase the dissemination of pertinent information to the public, which in turn leads to a reduction in residential fires.

The Department realizes that it must continue to concentrate its efforts on private dwelling house fires as they place severe emotional and financial strain on the victims of these residential fires. In so doing the Department under the direction of the Fire Prevention Unit will seek to introduce an aftercare programme which will provide victims with pertinent information that will make the process of rebuilding their lives appear less daunting. The Barbados Fire Service realizes that it must move away from just providing an emergency response to an incident, to one of providing humanitarian service after the incident. The image below shows fire officers extinguishing a fire at a private dwelling house.



*Image 18: Fire officers at work at a House Fire*

The parish of St. Michael, once again, recorded the highest number of residential fires for 2016. This parish recorded forty (40) residential fires, followed by St. Phillip with ten (10) and Christ Church with nine (9). St. Andrew recorded the least with just one residential fire in 2016. The Department continues to monitor this situation as the St. Michael area is densely populated with additional obstacles, such as narrow roads and improperly parked vehicles, which often times impedes the progress of responding officers.



***Chart 3: Residential Fire Calls in St. Michael by Year***

## **MOTOR VEHICLE FIRES**

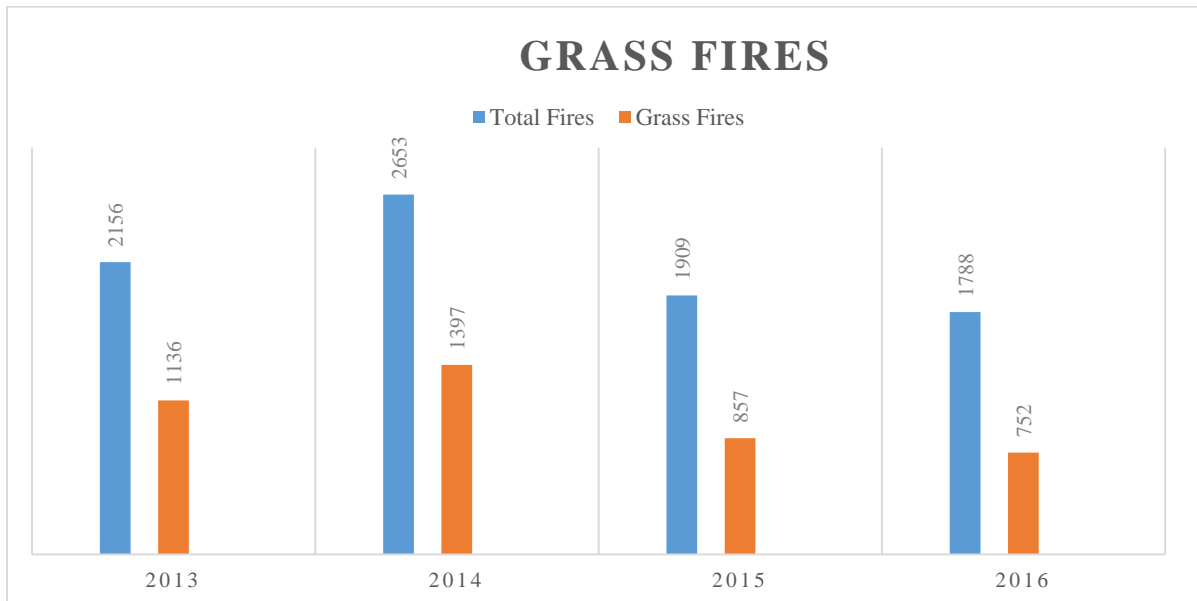
In 2016 the Barbados Fire Service responded to a total of forty-nine (49) motor vehicle fires this is compared to forty-five (45) in 2015. This shows a nine percent (9%) increase in this type of fire. This increase is of great concern to the BFS as this type of fire also carries implications where insurance liability is concerned.



*Image 19: Fire Officers extinguishing a motor vehicle fire*

## GRASS FIRES

The Department over the years continue to grapple with this particular category of fire. In 2016 there were seven hundred and fifty-two (**752**) grass fires. In 2015 the Department recorded eight hundred and fifty-seven (**857**); 2014 thirteen hundred and ninety-seven (**1397**) and 2013 eleven hundred and thirty-six (**1136**). These figures show a decline in the occurrence of these fires but they still account for sometimes half or more than half of the overall fires responded to by members of the Department.



*Chart 4: Chart comparing total fires for year with grass fires for same year*

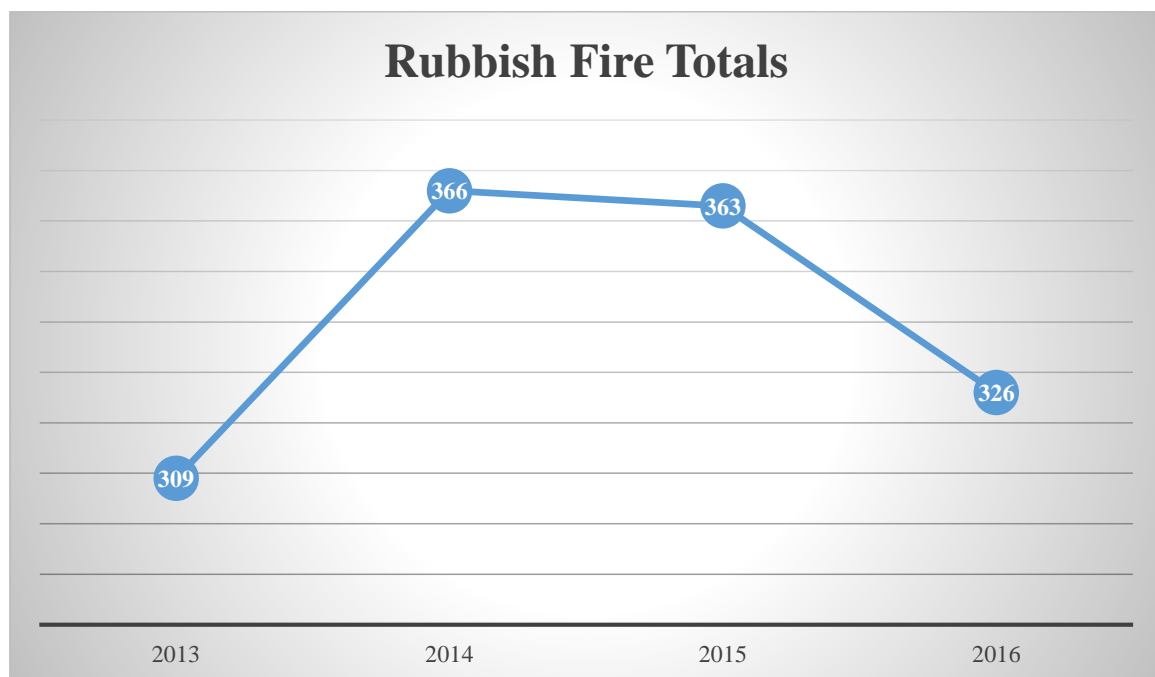


*Image 20: Fire officers battling a grass fire*

## RUBBISH FIRES

Rubbish fires like grass fires account for a substantial percentage of the overall fires that occur in Barbados annually. In 2016 the officers of the Department responded to three hundred and twenty-six (326) fires from this category. These rubbish fires do not only pose significant risk to other households as the majority of them are lit in densely populated areas, but they also pose an environmental hazard as they affect persons who suffer from asthma and other respiratory conditions.

The frequency of these rubbish fires declined to three hundred and twenty-six (326) in 2016 as compared to the three hundred and sixty-three (363) recorded in 2015 and three hundred and sixty-six (366) recorded in 2014. However, this category of fire occurs at a rate that is causing concern for the Department.

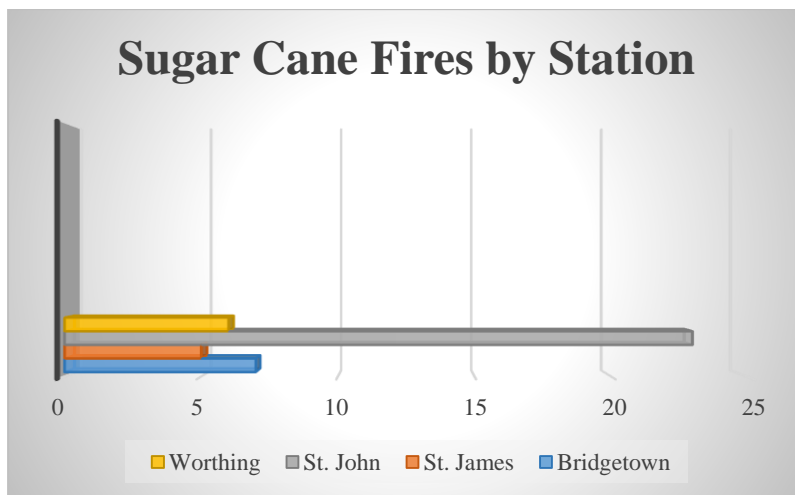


*Chart 5: Rubbish Fires by Year*

## SUGAR CANE FIRES

The Barbados Fire Service responded to a total of forty-one (41) sugar cane fires for the year 2016. This figure shows a further decline in numbers for this category as fifty-nine (59) cane fires were recorded in 2015, one hundred and thirty-three (133) in 2014 and eighty-nine (89) in 2013.

The decline in frequency is an encouraging sign to the Department but this decline could be in part due to the fewer number of sugar cane fields in production across the island. The chart below shows cane fires for 2016 by Station.



*Chart 6: Cane Fires by Station*



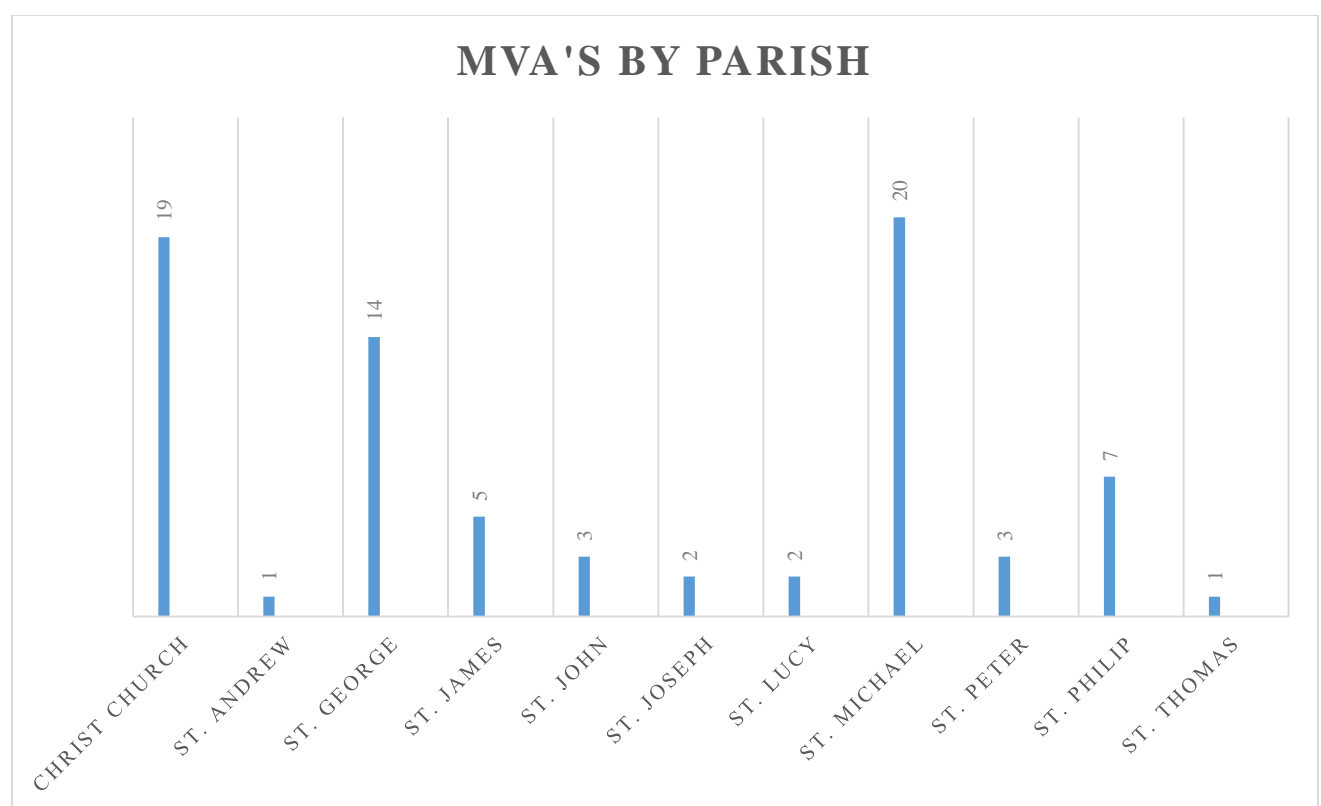
*Image 21: Sugar Cane Fire*



## MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS (MVA's)

In 2016 the officers of the Barbados Fire Service responded to a total of seventy-seven (77) motor vehicle accidents which is a significant decrease from the ninety-four (94) recorded accidents that the Department responded to in 2015. The Department has realized the increasing role of the Fire Officer at accident scenes and has been proactive in having several officers trained as Emergency Medical Technicians so that efficient pre-hospital care could be administered to injured persons until advanced medical assistance arrives.

The chart below shows the distribution of motor vehicular accidents across the island in 2016.



**Chart 7: Motor Vehicle Accidents by Parish**

## TRAINING

The Training and Development Unit officially became the Barbados Fire Academy in April of 2016; embarking on a new era of training that will be offered to local and regional fire officers, other emergency service personnel and the general public. The Academy which will be situated at the Arch Hall Fire Station, is earmarked to be the leading centre for fire and rescue training in the region, as its dedicated staff will continue to pursue nothing less than excellence from their charges and themselves.

The Academy will comprise of the Chief Training Officer, Deputy Chief Training Officer, Chief Instructor and a cadre of highly skilled instructors to facilitate the courses that will be offered. These courses will include, but are not limited to, High Rise Fire Fighting, Fire Fighter I and II, Incident Command System and Basic Fire Fighting skills.

The Academy conducted several internal and external training courses for the recorded year which included Driver Training and Familiarization with the Newly Acquired Vehicles, and developmental courses such as Crew Manager, Watch Manager and Fire Fighter I.

The image below shows fire officers conducting training with the battery operated Jaws of Life at a designated training site under the supervision of a Barbados Fire Service Instructor and a representative from Hurst Jaws of Life.

This new fixture in the rescue equipment of the Department is the first of its kind as the other rescue equipment currently used by officers are powered by a gas generator.



*Image 22: Fire Officers training with new battery operated Jaws-of-Life*

The table below shows the internal courses that were completed by officers during the year 2016.

<b>COURSE</b>	<b>PERSONS</b>
Appliance MM1	47
Combined Ladder and Platform	16
Crew Manager	7
Development Training	34
Drill Course (BDF)	2
Fire Fighter 1	24
Hazardous Material Awareness	12
High Rise Fire Fighting	9
Incident Command System	7
Incident Command and Mass Casualty (BDF)	4
Mental Health Awareness	19
Medical Subject Matter Expert (BDF)	3
Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)	1
P.R.D.S (Training Administration Division)	5
Registry Procedures (T.A.D)	5
Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus	4
Training of Trainers	19
Urban Search and Rescue Training of Trainers Hand Off	8

***Table 3: Training completed by Fire Service Personnel***

The table below shows external courses that were carried out by Fire Service personnel for business houses across the island.

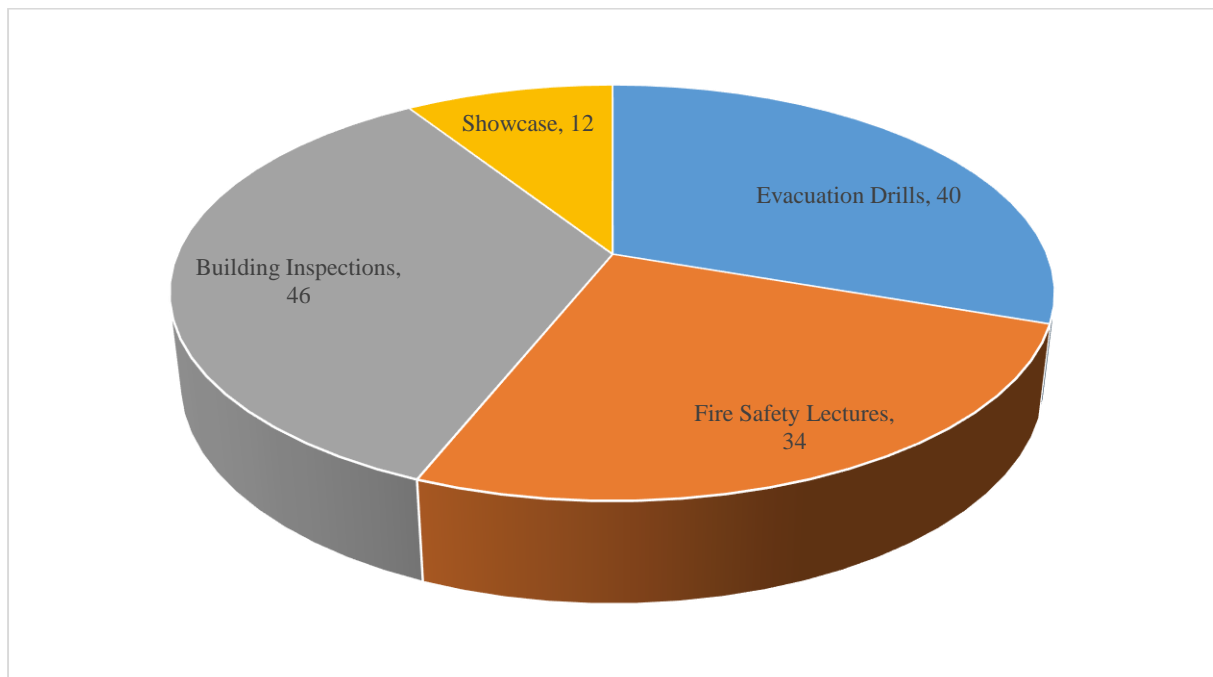
<b>Month</b>	<b>Company</b>	<b>Fire Safety</b>	<b>Persons</b>	<b>Evacuation Procedures</b>	<b>Persons</b>
<b>January</b>	4	4	44	4	84
<b>February</b>	4	5	54	0	0
<b>March</b>	5	6	49	0	0
<b>April</b>	5	4	55	2	41
<b>May</b>	10	11	106	6	41
<b>June</b>	9	11	112	2	17
<b>July</b>	9	24	276	14	114
<b>August</b>	13	26	272	3	18
<b>September</b>	8	9	56	2	31
<b>October</b>	2	3	34	0	0
<b>November</b>	8	8	86	0	0
<b>December</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>1144</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>346</b>

*Table 4: Training conducted by Fire Service Personnel*

## **FIRE PREVENTION and CODE ENFORCEMENT**

The Fire Prevention and Code Enforcement Unit is one that truly follows the mission statement of the Barbados Fire Service because they ensure that they do all in their power through their various programmes to secure the lives and property of all Barbadians and visitors alike. The Unit, although expanding its portfolio to undertake the colossal tasks of ensuring that business houses and government entities are aligned with the fire safety codes and regulations; also places a significant portion of their attention and operational time into developing strategies and creating new programmes to reach every community within this island.

The chart below indicates each number and type of activity carried out by the Unit in 2016.



***Chart 8: Fire Prevention and Code Enforcement Unit activity for 2016***

## **FIRE SAFETY LECTURES and DEMONSTRATIONS**

These lectures and demonstrations are key elements in the Fire Prevention Units' and by extension the Barbados Fire Services' fight, to ensure that vital life and fire safety information is reaching the business community of Barbados. The Unit conducts these sessions throughout the year as they aim to have every business entity up-to-date with reference to fire safety techniques.

Images 23 and 24 below shows a member of the Unit carefully monitoring members of the public as they use extinguishers in an attempt to extinguish a small fire.



*Image 23: Fire Safety participant extinguishing a fire*



*Image 24: Fire Safety Instructor assisting participant to extinguish a fire*

## **JUNIOR FIRE CADET PROGRAMME**

The Junior Fire Cadet Programme in 2016 afforded twenty-eight (28) students from a cross section of the country's secondary schools to experience a snippet of life as a fire officer as well as the many skills and roles that officers undertake. The programme was held over a duration of six weeks and commenced at the Barbados Community College but midway through the programme it was relocated to the Bridgetown Fire Station, where the Cadets completed their course.

The Programme seeks to strike a balance between the theoretical and practical aspects of the Barbados Fire Service; therefore, cadets are exposed to hose and hydrant drill, the history and rank structure of the Barbados Fire Service, water safety, communication skills and first aid. The Programme aims to develop the youth of Barbados by instilling employability traits and life skills such as a positive attitude, confidence, accountability, respect for authority, discipline and self-motivation.

The Cadets this year had the privilege to be a part of the memorial march for the IABPFF Conference. They were also invited to a number of the workshops being conducted.



*Image 25: Junior Fire Cadets preparing for Water Safety Training*



## **CONCLUSION**

The vision of being recognised as a professional fire department locally regionally and internationally is no easy task; it is a vision that has to be incorporated and ingrained in the psyche of every member of the Barbados Fire Service. It will therefore take the effort of every individual to form a group of determined persons whose only interest is the betterment of the Service. This betterment will come in the form of excellent customer service which can only be achieved through personal and professional development.

Challenges, Criticisms and Complaints are unfortunately aspects of business life that cannot be avoided, in spite of one's best efforts to appease both the internal and external customers, but despite these negatives, the Barbados Fire Service concluded a year of more positives than negatives and cemented the efforts of every uniformed officer and civilian worker in creating an atmosphere of excellence.

The Service will continue to raise the bar of excellence as the Community expects more every day. The BFS will continue to raise the bar of excellence because more is expected from within and therefore the Department will continue to train, continue to teach and continue to transition to attain the vision.