

**EXPLORING HOME FIRE SAFETY AWARENESS
AMONG THE MALAYSIAN PUBLIC**

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**LAPORAN AKHIR PENYELIDIKAN “EXPLORING HOME FIRE SAFETY
AWARENESS AMONG THE MALAYSIAN PUBLIC”**

Merujuk kepada perkara di atas, bersama-sama ini disertakan 2 (dua) naskah Laporan Akhir Penyelidikan bertajuk “EXPLORING HOME FIRE SAFETY AWARENESS AMONG THE MALAYSIAN PUBLIC” untuk tujuan pengesahan jawatan.

Sekian. Terima kasih.

Yang benar,



AZIM SULAIMAN

Ketua

Projek Penyelidikan

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ABSTRACT

Fire cases in Malaysia have been increasing rapidly over the years. Majority of the cases involved residential buildings which seriously had caused property losses, severe injuries to the victims and even death. This circumstance is significantly worrying with regard to the national development, as the prime purpose of owning a house is to provide shelter and security to the occupants.

Issues reported and surveys conducted over the recent years as shown in the media revealed that the major contribution towards the increase of fire cases in Malaysia especially cases which involved residential buildings is due to the low level of fire safety awareness among the public. In other words, it can be assumed that home fire safety is being mooted, since there have been a lack of fire safety measures in most houses in Malaysia for instance installing smoke detectors and portable fire extinguishers as compared to houses in Britain, Australia and New Zealand where it had significantly reduced the fire fatalities and losses. Besides that, the Fire and Rescue Department found that most fatalities and losses caused by fire could have been prevented if occupants had an extinguisher at hand.

Over the recent years, there have been campaigns, seminars and trainings on fire safety conducted by the National Fire and Rescue Department. However, since the level of fire safety awareness among the public based on this research finding is at an unacceptable level, perhaps these fire preventive measures had somehow failed to up lift the level of fire safety awareness among the public since the number of fire cases throughout the years is still at a worrying stage. Furthermore, in 2004, the government was looking into a proposal to require homeowners to install smoke detectors and keep portable fire extinguishers in their houses as a fire safety measure. Sadly, after four years since the proposal was first introduced, there have been minimal implementation or enforcement with regard to the proposal. Perhaps there should be a question to be considered regarding the responsibility of promoting fire safety awareness among the public. Does it solely lie on the regulating authorities or is it the responsibility of each individual?

CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Do you ever think about your safety in case of fire? Are you confident that your home and family are safe from fire? If yes, do you take all the necessary precautions to minimize the risks? However, if the answer is no, you are definitely risking your life which includes your family, from the severity of fire.

Over the years, fire cases in Malaysia have been increasing rapidly. The increased numbers are due to lack of awareness on fire safety among Malaysian public, as quoted by the former Minister of Housing and Local Government, Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting in October 2004 (The Star, October 2004). From a survey conducted in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor in 2005, only 60.58% from 3,061 respondents were aware of fire safety while the balance are not sure or surprisingly do not know at all about fire safety (Sukri, 2005). An average of 2,200 fire cases a year happened in Malaysia during that particular period of time (Bernama, 1998). Within the same period of time, it was also stated that 90% of fire cases happened due to negligence and lack of awareness on fire safety from the public. The fire cases involved premises such as houses, offices, shops, workshops, stores, schools and factories. Awareness in this context is being defined as having knowledge of fire safety.

The statistics of the national's fire cases produced by the National Fire and Rescue Department for a time frame of ten years from the year 1995 to 2004 showed that residential buildings, particularly on terraced houses, ranked the highest of all fire cases in the respective years. More sadly, these cases involved severe injuries to the victims or even caused death. In 2001, there were 62 deaths caused by fire incidents, followed with 46 in 2002, 100 in 2003 and 65 in 2004 as shown in Table 1 and 2 (Berita Harian, March 2003) & National Fire and Rescue Department).