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GEO-LEGAL SURVEY OF THE LAWS ON THE SUBJECT OF FIRE IN NIGERIA

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Keywords: Fire, Workmen Compensation, Insurance and Climate change.

ABSTRACT

Fire incidents have recently become a phenomenon in Nigeria, with far reaching consequences on the economy, the environment, the employer, the employee and the victim. These consequences are usually fraught with legal duties, obligations and liabilities. The paper offers an overview of both the common law and statute law perspectives in relation to the civil and criminal responsibility for fire incidences.

Finally, the paper espoused the need for adherence to provisions of fire-related laws with a view to avert the multiple environmental problems such as climate change, global warming, desertification, greenhouse gas emissions, ozone layer depletion that confront the universe of which Nigeria is an integral part.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Nigeria has experienced a plethora of fire outbreaks for all types of reasons. The more common of these reasons border on negligence on the part of both the perpetrator and the victim who has failed to adhere to preventive methods of protection particularly, Human Safety, Environment Standards (HSES). The reasons for fire incidents in Nigeria are many and sometimes arson (please note that this term is used in the general English sense rather than in any legal sense). Quite a number of these fire incidents were popular such as Akote, Jesse, Onitsha and Lagos (to mention just a few). The thrust of this paper is to comprehensively evaluate and analyze the requisite laws relating to fire incidences both from the civil and criminal perspectives.

Whilst the issue of "Fire" incidents in other jurisdictions have become settled Law and an array of legislations and judicial precedents (both international and domestic) permeate the legal climate, this is not so in Nigeria. At best, there is a hazy reference to the International Labour Organization's Regulations about the accessibility of "exits" in corporate sites in general and on factory floors in particular during the incidence of fire which occurred at two Chinese-owned factories at Odogunyan, Ibeju-Lekki, Lagos State on

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