

The **Kiss nightclub fire** started between 2:00 and 2:30 (BRST)^[3] on 27 January 2013 in Santa Maria, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, killing 245 people^[1] and injuring at least 630 others.^{[4][5][6][7][8]} It is the second most-devastating fire disaster in the history of Brazil—surpassed only by the Great North American Circus fire of December 1961, which killed 503 people in Niterói, and the deadliest nightclub fire since the December 2000 fire that killed 309 people in Luoyang, China. It is also the third-deadliest nightclub fire in history, behind the Luoyang Christmas fire and the Cocoanut Grove fire in 1942.

External links

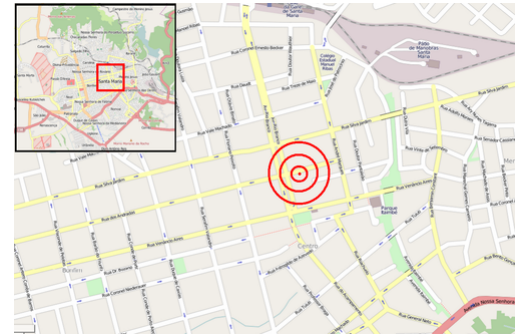
Date	27 January 2013
Time	Between 2:00 and 2:30 (BRST)
Location	<u>Downtown</u> , <u>Sede district</u> , <u>Santa Maria</u> , <u>Rio Grande do Sul</u> , <u>Brazil</u>
Cause	Ignition of <u>acoustic foam</u> by illegal use of <u>pyrotechnics</u>
Deaths	245 ^[1]
Non-fatal injuries	630 ^[2]

A map of Brazil with state boundaries. A red dot is placed in the southernmost state, Rio Grande do Sul, near the border with Argentina. The text 'Santa Maria, Rio Grande do Sul' is written below the map, with the red dot positioned over the word 'Rio'.

Witnesses have said either a flare or fireworks lit by band members may have started the fire.^[11] Brazilian police stated that the fire began when the band Gurizada Fandangueira^[12] ignited a pyrotechnic device (similar to a signaling flare) while performing on stage.^[13] The flare then ignited flammable acoustic foam in the ceiling.^{[14][15]} According to the authorities, other reasons for the high death toll include the lack of emergency exits (the only access in and out of the building was the front

door) and the fact that the number of people inside exceeded the maximum capacity by hundreds.^[16]

About 90% of the victims succumbed to smoke inhalation.^[17] Many people died as they either tried to hide in bathrooms or, in panic mistook them for exits. At least 180 bodies were removed from the bathrooms.^[18] More than 150 were injured by the crush at the front door and the rapidly accumulating smoke within the nightclub. 14 injuries were attributed to severe burns caused by flames,^[19] with eight victims succumbing to their injuries in the days and weeks following the incident. More than 90 people were hospitalized.^[19]



Map showing location of nightclub in Santa Maria

Colonel Guido Pedroso de Melo of the Rio Grande do Sul Fire Department stated that the club's front door was locked. De Melo told CNN: "This overcrowding made it difficult for people to leave, and according to the information we have, the security guards trapped the victims inside."^[20]

The fire has the second-highest death toll for an entertainment event in Brazil; it is second only to the 1961 Niterói circus fire, which killed more than 500 people.^[21]

Investigation

Based on an investigation and the accounts of survivors, the cause of the fire was found to be an illegal firework device that ignited the acoustic foam on the ceiling.^{[1][22]}

Two co-owners of the nightclub and two members of the band were arrested and questioned by police. One of the owners of the nightclub tried to commit suicide while still being treated at the hospital; however, one of the police officers guarding his room noticed the attempt and intervened.^[23]

The state fire department found that the premises did not have enough emergency exits and was not authorized to use fireworks. The fire department, however, did issue a permit for the club to operate. The permit stated that the club had two emergency exits. The fact that false information was used by the club and approved by the fire department resulted in a state investigation of the authorities responsible for supervising the nightclub, including the city hall and the fire department itself. It was also reported that the fire extinguishers in the club may have been artificial or were disabled at the time.^[24]

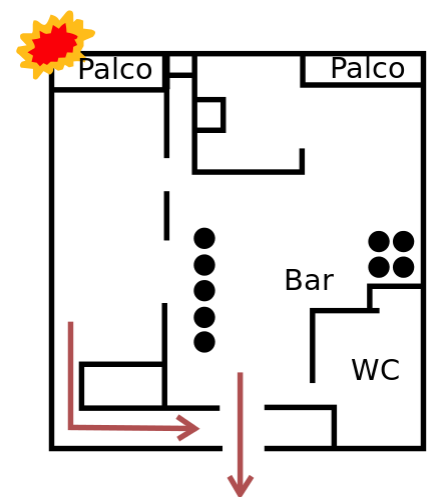


Illustration of the nightclub fire.

On 30 January, the nightclub's owner deflected blame to "the whole country", as well as to architects and inspectors who were commissioned with ensuring the building's safety, according to his lawyer. By that time, the death toll was at least 235.^[25] The next day, officials inspected and closed more than 58 nightlife spots around the country as part of a crackdown on unsafe public spaces.^[26]

On 2 April, two nightclub owners and two band members were charged with manslaughter.^[27]

Reactions




Domestic

Brazilian president Dilma Rousseff stated, "I want to tell the Brazilians and the population of Santa Maria that we stand together in this sad moment," before departing early^[28] from a summit of the EU and the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean in Santiago, Chile to visit grieving relatives of the victims.^[29] Rousseff declared three days of official mourning. Santa Maria's city government established thirty days of official mourning.^{[30][31]}

Organisers postponed a ceremony on 28 January in Brasília that marked 500 days to the 2014 FIFA World Cup.^[10]

The incident resulted in the inspection of safety features of thousands of nightclubs all over the country. In São Paulo alone, 60% of the nightclubs inspected were found to be operating against safety regulations.^[32]

International

-  Argentina — Argentine Health Minister, Juan Luis Manzur, arranged the delivery of skin transplants for the injured, commenting: "We will make available to our Brazilian counterparts the amount of skin we can provide, according to the existence of it in our skin bank which operates in the Garrahan Hospital."^[33]
-  United Kingdom — on 6 February 2013 during a football friendly match between England and Brazil (2–1) at Wembley, London, players of both teams wore black armbands to commemorate the 55th anniversary of the Munich air disaster and to remember those who died in the Kiss nightclub fire.
-  Russia — President of Russia Vladimir Putin sent his profound condolences to President of Brazil Dilma Rousseff.^[34]

See also

 Media related to Kiss nightclub fire at Wikimedia Commons

- List of nightclub fires
- List of human stampedes

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