

**Freedom of Information request reference number:** FOIA4200.1

**Date of response:** 19 February 2019

**Request and Response:**

The request is for information that will aid me in a study regarding High-rise incidents and emergency response.

Please would you be able to provide me with the answers and information to the following questions:

- *Do you have High-rise structures in your response area, if yes how many and what is the size of the largest structure?*

We do not hold this information. There is no official source/s of information for the number of high rise buildings in London. From the information that is available we can approximate that there are around 20,000 buildings in London with an occupied height of over eighteen metres (high rise). Of these, around 5,000 are classed as being for residential use. The London Fire Brigade (LFB) will only hold information on the buildings we have inspected.

- *Do you have an operational policy for dealing with high-rise incident, if yes would be able to provide a copy of this information?*

As you are probably aware, the Prime Minister has ordered a Public Inquiry into the Grenfell tower fire (<https://www.grenfelltowerinquiry.org.uk/>). As part of this several LFB policy documents have been made available, including a copy of our 'High Rise Firefighting' policy. These can be viewed directly at the following link: <https://www.grenfelltowerinquiry.org.uk/evidence/lfb-policy-documents>.

- *What are your average response times for the first and second fire appliance for the last three years?*

Pump Order	2016	2017	2018
1	05:25	05:14	05:15
2	06:46	06:35	06:34

- *How many turn outs have you had in the last three years to a High-rise property? Out of these responses how many required Firefighting actions to be carried out?*

Please see the data set out in the table below.

Action Parent	Action	Calendar Year			Grand Total
		2016	2017	2018	
Hosereels, jets, monitors	Hosereel (high pressure) (HRJ) - augmented supply	15	31	36	82
	Hosereel (high pressure) (HRJ) - tank supply only	31	45	92	168

	Hosereel (low pressure) (HR) - augmented supply	5	5	8	18
	Hosereel (low pressure) (HR) - tank supply only	7	8	15	30
	Main branch/Jet (J)	55	52	74	181
	Monitors (MON) - ground or aerial		1	1	2
<b>Hosereels, jets, monitors Total</b>		<b>113</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>481</b>
<b>None</b>	Burned out (Allowed to burn under control)	8	7	16	31
	No firefighting	75	154	170	399
<b>None Total</b>		<b>83</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>430</b>
<b>Non-portable / fixed sources</b>	Water from fixed hosereel installation		1		1
<b>Non-portable / fixed sources Total</b>			<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>Portable extinguishers</b>	CO2 (carbon dioxide)	1	6	6	13
	Dry powder (DP)	3	5	8	16
	Extinguisher - other		4	5	9
	Foam - AFFF (Aqueous Film Forming Foam)			1	1
	Water, soda acid, gas expulsion etc (water stored pressure)	27	34	23	84
<b>Portable extinguishers Total</b>		<b>31</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>123</b>
<b>Small means</b>	Beating, stamping		3	1	4
	Cutting away	2	3	4	9
	Disconnection of fuel supply	15	30	35	80
	Immersed in water	6	7	3	16
	Other small means		1	1	2
	Removal from/of heat source	42	78	65	185
	Smothering - use of fire blanket			2	2
	Smothering - use of other method		3	3	6
	Water - domestic supply	14	14	19	47
	Water - from bucket/containers	24	31	28	83

<b>Small means Total</b>		<b>103</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>434</b>
<b>Not Known</b>	Not known	1		1	2
	Other	1	1	2	4
<b>Not Known Total</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>332</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>619</b>	<b>1,475</b>

- *What is your Pre-determined Attendance (PDA) for an incident in a High-rise premise for an unconfirmed and confirmed fire?*
- *In the last three years have any issues, which hindered Firefighters response at High-rise incidents been recorded/observed? If yes what were the factors involved?*
- *Since the Grenfell incident in 2017 have you made changes to your PDA for a High-rise incident; confirmed and unconfirmed?*
- *Since the Grenfell incident in 2017 have you made changes to your policies/procedures regarding High-rise incidents?*
- *In the last three years have you as a service researched/implemented new tactics or equipment for dealing with high-rise incidents?*

Whilst I can confirm that the Brigade does hold further information meeting the parameters of your request (above). Regrettably, this information falls within the scope of the Public inquiry and whilst the Public Inquiry is still being heard and the investigations are still underway, we consider that to release any of this information held in connection to the fire, our operational response or documentation held prior to the fire, is exempt, for now, from the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

I am of the view that S31 of the FOIA – 'Law Enforcement' applies to this information and that LFB is therefore not required to disclose it.

The exemption is engaged because release of the information at this time would or would be likely to prejudice:

1. The prevention or detection of crime
2. The apprehension or prosecution of offenders
3. The administration of justice.

I take this view because the release of information which may meet the parameters of this request would or would be likely to prejudice the ongoing police investigation and the Public Inquiry. If we published the information you have requested (and you will understand that providing information to you is effectively putting that information into the public domain) any witness giving evidence to the Public Inquiry may have access to information that they otherwise would not have seen, and that this may impact on any testimony/evidence they give, or are likely to give, to the Public Inquiry. Such an impact may come via information published by, and in the media.

In considering the application of S31, I have considered factors for and against disclosure.

Factors in favour of disclosure: There is arguably a public interest in making available information about the incident and the safety of Grenfell Tower, to inform the public debate on this issue.

Factors against disclosure: (a) It is in the public interest that the Police and other law enforcement agencies can gather information and investigate without fear of information that may be relevant to their investigations being made available to the public before they have been able to complete their investigations. These investigations are still at a very early stage and it is therefore in the public interest to maintain the exemption at this time; (b) It is in the public interest that a Public Inquiry should have the opportunity to consider all information which may be relevant to the terms of reference of that Inquiry, without fear that public authorities will make disclosures of relevant material to the public before an Inquiry has even begun; and (c) The information which is withheld is not in the public domain and is particularly sensitive.

It is for the above reasons that I am of the view that any information held which falls within the parameters of your request is exempt from disclosure under S31 FOIA. We do appreciate the public's interest in this incident and the need for transparency about what has happened, but at this time that need is best met if the Police and the Inquiry can conduct their work without the information we hold being compromised.

As set out earlier in my response, the Inquiry have, and are, making a significant amount of evidential information available to the public. You can view that information here (<https://www.grenfelltowerinquiry.org.uk/evidence>).

There is also other information available on the following websites that you may be interested in:

- Metropolitan Police's website (<http://news.met.police.uk/>).
- Department for Communities and Local Government (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/grenfell-tower>)
- National Fire Chief Council (NFCC) (<https://www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk/Grenfell-Tower>).

I am sorry that this may not be the response you were expecting, but I hope you'll find what has been provided of use and understand our need to fully support the Inquiry and investigations in every way we can.

This request has been dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. If you are dissatisfied by this response you can request an internal review by writing to the Head of Information Management at the address below (or email [informationaccess@london-fire.gov.uk](mailto:informationaccess@london-fire.gov.uk)).

Further information about your information rights (including how to raise a concern or make a complaint) is available from the Information Commissioner's Office on their website at [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk) or by writing to them at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.