

**Freedom of Information request reference number:** 8865.1

**Date of response:** 12/08/2024

**Request:**

1. May I request the policy or procedure for Mobilising fire investigation officers/ units 2. Who would usually attend fire investigations 3. What incidents do fire safety officers / inspectors attend 4. Requirements for fire investigator roles

**Response:**

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For questions 1-3 please see this link [policy number 399 | fire investigation \(london-fire.gov.uk\)](#) Which will take you to our published policy 399 Fire Investigation.

4. Requirements for fire investigator roles

Please see below Job Description for the Fire Investigator role.

We have dealt with your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. For more information about this process please see the guidance we publish about making a request on our website: <https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/about-us/transparency/request-information-from-us/>



**The London Fire Commissioner is the fire and rescue authority for London**

**Our purpose** – Trusted to serve and protect London

**Our vision** – We will be a dynamic, forward-looking organisation of fully engaged people at the centre of the communities we serve, adapting to the changing needs of London.

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

<b>JOB TITLE</b>	:	Fire Investigation Officer
<b>EMPLOYER:</b>	;	London Fire Commissioner
<b>POST No:</b>	:	430313
<b>ROLE</b>	:	FRS D
<b>DIRECTORATE</b>	:	Director of Operations
<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	:	Fire Safety
<b>LOCATION</b>	:	Dowgate Fire Station/BHQ
<b>REPORTS TO</b>	:	SC Fire Investigation
<b>DUTY SYSTEM</b>	:	Shift - Watch based

**HOW THIS ROLE CONTRIBUTES TO OUR VISION:**

By investigating and reporting on fires, outcomes can be identified and used to reduce risk to the people of London. Gathering, reporting on and presenting evidence from fires will support Prevention and Protection activities and legal proceedings where required.

**NOTE:**

The post holder must have (this is not an exhaustive person specification):

- A valid full driving license (car/light van).
- A relevant and valid Fire Investigation qualification to the sector minimum requirement (Level 5) and preferably experience or qualification in relevant legal processes (e.g. expert witness or investigative practice), or recognised equivalent qualifications and/ or experience.
- Demonstrable evidence of the application of current practises for fireground risk assessment and competence (commensurate and appropriate to fire service fire investigations).

**CORE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**1. Leadership and Management**

- 1.1 To gather, review and report on the origin and cause of fires, including observations regarding the building's performance and human behaviour to a range of stakeholders. Internally, this would include

Fire Safety, Service Delivery, Operational Assurance and senior/principal managers. Externally, reporting lines may include the Police, Local Authority agencies or others as applicable.

- 1.2 To liaise with partner agencies and stakeholders at senior level (e.g. senior Police staff or HM Coroner), including at 'live' operational incidents, ensuring compliance with operational command and priorities.
- 1.3 To support multi-agency (e.g. Police) investigations at fire scenes and during the subsequent data gathering process.
- 1.4 To handle, process and redact Fire Investigation (FI) information on behalf of the Brigade, in visual and written form, relating to all incidents, some of which may be of both a graphic and disturbing nature.
- 1.5 Accurately record all work activities on relevant Brigade databases, forms and logs; and keep records up to date in line with legal, Brigade and agreed sector practices, policies and standards. Also, to produce written reports, briefs, emails and correspondence as required and in a timely manner.
- 1.6 Respond to requests from loss adjusters, solicitors, occupiers, etc regarding Fire Investigation (FI) information available from incidents, on behalf of the FI management team.
- 1.7 To assist in the creation and delivery of learning & development inputs on Fire Investigation related topics, in conjunction with the FI management team.
- 1.8 To develop and maintain a political sensitivity appropriate to the demands of the role of Fire Investigation Officer. This would include awareness of organisational or political risk, the sensitivities of criminal investigations and commercial sensitivity, both at the time of the fire and post-fire.
- 1.9 To lead, manage and direct operational staff at an incident, in line with the role of the Fire Investigation Officer (e.g. scene preservation and security, cutting away and scene examination processes).

## **2. Communication**

- 2.1 To positively communicate and support the implementation of Brigade policies, procedures and management guidance.
- 2.2 To positively communicate and support Brigade values, including the Inclusion strategy (Safer Together).
- 2.3 Establish and maintain professional and effective working relationships with Brigade staff and external organisations.
- 2.4 Deal with contacts from external organisations and members of the public helpfully, politely and in a timely fashion, according to the principles of customer care and Brigade policy.
- 2.5 Provide technical information about the fire protection measures in buildings and the origins and causes of fires so that the appropriate action may be taken.
- 2.6 To conduct briefings and presentations to LFB staff and members of the community on a range of FI related issues.
- 2.7 To liaise with members of the public and explain where appropriate, the process of an investigation and how the conclusion has been reached
- 2.8 To liaise with General Counsel regarding investigations and requests for information of a sensitive nature and give advice on fire scenes and the process of investigations, when required.

- 2.9 To provide information (including that of a sensitive nature) to senior and principal managers. This could include information from high profile, politically sensitive or fatal fires.
- 2.10 Liaise with operational staff and managers on the fireground to assist with the resolution of the incident (from a fire investigation perspective) and provide debriefs to operational staff at or away from the fireground (from a fire investigation perspective) as required.

### **3. Performance Management**

- 3.1 To assess (where applicable) and develop staff against set criteria in a range of processes including: PRDS; CPD; Recruitment etc; in accordance with Brigade policies and standardisation procedures.
- 3.2 To liaise with a range of Brigade departments to ensure personnel are developed in accordance with Brigade policies and procedures, where they are updated or familiarisation is required.
- 3.3 Take responsibility for ensuring own continuing professional development, maintaining the necessary level of health and fitness to carry out your role, in line with Brigade policies. Identifying areas where new skills and/or knowledge would be beneficial in relation to the duties of the post and undertaking appropriate developmental activities in consultation with line manager, subject to budgetary constraints.

### **4. Operational Duties**

- 4.1 Attend operational incidents and cold fire scenes as directed by Brigade Control or managers, in line with Brigade policies.
- 4.2 Conform to safe systems of working when at fire scenes.
- 4.3 Support Incident Command by helping to ascertain the origin, cause and progression of the fire and to report on the effectiveness of fire precautions in buildings which have had fires

### **5. External Liaison**

- 5.1 To take a proactive approach to representing the Brigade in a positive light, in due accordance with Brigade procedures, protocols, values and aims.
- 5.2 To prepare and present evidence for legal processes and proceedings, including Criminal courts and HM Coroner's court. Provide feedback from legal processes and proceedings, highlighting any matters of relevant to the Brigade

### **6. Administration**

- 6.1 Plan and organise personal workload to ensure that both routine and unscheduled tasks are completed promptly. Report anticipated difficulties in meeting deadlines.
- 6.2 Complete personnel and training records as part of day to day duties, to support information management.
- 6.3 To compile and provide statistical information on a range of work streams to inform decision making.

- 6.4 To assist in maintaining robust administrative systems and complying with departmental policies i.e. Finance, Property, Procurement, Health and Safety etc.
- 6.5 Ensure the security of confidential and sensitive information/data, in accordance with Brigade policies, the Data Protection, GDPR and Freedom of Information Acts
- 6.6 To ensure that environmental impacts are considered when carrying out the duties of the post.
- 6.7 To assist on local projects and provide input on Brigade-wide projects.
- 6.8 To be responsible for the delivery of equality objectives at a local level and for the day-to-day management of equalities and personnel policies. To be responsible for applying a consistent and appropriate approach to managing individual and diverse needs in the workplace, in line with equalities and personnel policies.
- 6.9 Keep informed of Brigade policies in relation to the role and the level of responsibility. Carry out all activities in accordance with these policies, highlighting any development needs and asking and guidance if necessary.
- 6.10 Use the information technology and communication systems of the Brigade in accordance with the Acceptable Use Policy.
- 6.11 Investigate accidents and near miss events, prepare reports and action plans including necessary corrective actions.
- 6.12 To be responsible for the application and enforcement of the Brigade's Health & Safety Policies and to undertake proactive action to reduce accidents and dangerous occurrences in the workplace or on the incident ground.

**Note 1:** The nature of this post may require you to work flexibly outside of your core hours, from time to time (subject to health & safety and legal/policy requirements).

**Note 2:** In addition to the duties set out above you may from time to time be required to undertake other duties necessary to meet the demands of the Brigade. Such duties to be commensurate with the responsibilities of the post.

**Note 3:** This job description including the systems and procedures mentioned herein may be changed from time to time, in line with Brigade requirements.

**Note 4:** This FRS role will involve being part of a fire investigation operational response on a watch based shift system and can involve exposure to traumatic and challenging incidents.

**Note 5:** The role is broad and encompasses fire ground operations (including challenging manual tasks).

**Note 6:** Due to the post being for a short fixed term contract, there will be an expectation that the applicant should be able to fulfil the immediate requirements of the role.

**DATE:** 15 July 2021

**Selection Criteria For : Fire Investigation Officer Grade: FRSD**

**1 Experience**

- 1.1 The candidate will have experience of Fire Investigation, be capable of working alone and under own initiative.
- 1.2 A relevant and valid Fire Investigation qualification to the sector minimum requirement (Level 5) and preferably experience or qualification in relevant legal processes (e.g. expert witness or investigative practice), or recognised equivalent qualifications and/ or experience.
- 1.3 They will have experience of communications both internally and externally.
- 1.4 They should have experience of dealing with individuals (MoP) who have experienced traumatic events (fires).
- 1.5 They should have experience of developing contacts internally and externally.
- 1.6 They should be used to working with the Brigade's I.T. systems and be able to produce reports and spreadsheets.
- 1.7 Have experience of delivering outputs to specified deadlines.
- 1.8 Have experience of communicating the progression of complex investigations (i.e. fatal fires, multi-agency investigations).
- 1.9 Should have experience of delivering presentations to small to medium audiences.

**2 Skills**

- 2.1 The candidate must be able to use Microsoft applications including Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and other I.T. systems.
- 2.2 The candidate will have basic photography skills.
- 2.3 The candidate should have a current full driving licence.
- 2.4 The candidate must be able to work with operational staff on the fireground and be able to apply appropriate risk assessment processes.
- 2.5 Must have the ability to manage own personal resilience, as the role will from time to time involve dealing with the challenging/traumatic incidents e.g. following a fire fatality.
- 2.6 The candidate must be able to manage their own workload.
- 2.7 Have ability to work alone and unsupervised, managing self and others as required.
- 2.8 Have the relevant competence to take samples in accordance with established protocols.

### **3 Knowledge**

- 3.1 The successful candidate will have knowledge and experience of the process of completing a Tier 2 fire investigation defined as complex fire and/or explosion incidents (non-terrorist) where the origin and cause is not easily established..
- 3.2 The candidate must have knowledge of basic health and safety.
- 3.3 The candidate must have an awareness of data protection legislation and know the requirements for collection, recording storage and dissemination of information.
- 3.4 The candidate will have awareness of F.O.I.A. requests.
- 3.5 Must have knowledge of the FRS Act 2004, specifically s45-47.

**Note:** These are the criteria against which your suitability for the post will be assessed. You must show clearly in your application how your experience, skills and knowledge meet each of the highlighted selection criteria or all if none are highlighted. If you do not address the relevant criteria on your application form it will not be possible to shortlist you. Please note that if shortlisted you will be required to address all criteria when interviewed.

**DATE:** 15 July 2021

## Our Values

Our values underpin everything we do. Refreshed in 2023 following engagement with our employees and communities, these values are a representation of LFB at our best. If you are appointed, you will be expected to uphold these values. You will be assessed against the values in your recruitment process.

Our values are:

- **Service** We put the public first
- **Courage** We step up to the challenge
- **Learning** We listen so that we can improve
- **Teamwork** We work together and include everyone
- **Integrity** We act with honesty
- **Equity** We treat everyone fairly according to their needs