

Freedom of Information request reference number: 6393.1

Date of response: 24 March 2022

Request:

I would like the London Fire Commissioner to provide any information about any existing plans and protocols that exist to combat a fire in the Palace of Westminster. This includes information about evacuating staff and specific plans to save the Grade 1 listed building.

I would also like the London Fire Commissioner to provide any information about drills and exercises undertaken in preparation for a possible fire in the Palace of Westminster.

Response:

The LFB's policy on the Management of Operational Risk information is intended to help ensure fire crews have efficient arrangements in place when attending incidents across London. This includes the Palace of Westminster, which has its own Premises Risk Assessment (PRA) and Operational Risk Database (ORD) entries in place. The operational risk information recorded for a particular building will support safe management and resolution of any incidents that may occur at the premises. The risk information recorded will ascertain or confirm the predetermined evacuation strategies in place for the particular building.

Detailed information about the operational risk information gathered and recorded is published online in LFB policy no. 800 (management of operational risk information). The policy can be accessed via the following [link](#) (page 9 onwards).

The ORD for Westminster notes that an exercise was conducted by local crews in March 2019 to test on arrival tactics. The Borough Commander for Westminster has confirmed another live exercise is also planned to take place in 2022.

They also confirmed that a familiarisation visit took place pre-pandemic restrictions when external scaffolding works were taking place.

In addition, a further meeting will take place this year in relation to salvage plans and evacuation plans. On the LFB website [here](#), there is comprehensive advice for those responsible for fire safety matters in heritage buildings. This includes guidance on the preparation of emergency response plans, salvage plans, grab lists, etc. On the page '[How to write a salvage plan](#)', there are templates to use, including for grab lists. The advice on this page recommends that multiple laminated copies of the salvage plan are kept in strategic locations, which can be easily reached by fire crews. It also advises to consider keeping copies off-site to ensure the plan can be reached even if access to the premises is restricted.

There is no requirement for emergency response plans, salvage plans or grab lists to be provided to, or to be kept by, the Brigade. Our Heritage team would assist with reviewing salvage and emergency response plans with Responsible Persons within Westminster palace if invited to do so. Copies would not be kept or saved on LFB systems for security reasons.

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](#).