

Freedom of Information request reference number: 6770.1

Date of response: 11/11/2022

Request:

In the last 3 calendar years to date how many formal internal secondment processes (not acting up) have been advertised Brigade wide and a formal assessment process held and carried out to appointment in order to temporarily backfill for FRS staff members (not operational) of all grades that have been off sick for 5 months or less?

Please can you provide this as anonymised numerical data in written format and include the following information in each individual case:

- a) Directorate, department/section, and FRS grade.*
- b) Date secondment was advertised.*
- c) Date formal assessment was held.*
- d) Whether the secondment was offered Brigade-wide or just offered departmentally.*
- e) Date the secondment started and ended.*
- f) Period of time (weeks/months) the substantive post holder was off sick before the secondment was advertised.*
- g) Period of time the secondment was offered for.*
- h) Did the sick substantive post holder return to work before the secondment period ended? If so, how long before?*

i) If the substantive post holder did not return to work, was the secondment appointment assimilated into post?

j) Rationale as to why a formal 'secondment' was offered rather than departmental temporary 'acting up' or offering an SRA?

Response:

Please see the table below which provides answers to questions (a), (b) and (c).

With regard to question (d), the information in the table below refers to secondments which were all advertised Brigade wide via the Recruitment Team.

Grade	Contract type	Department	Team	Date role advertised	Date of formal assessment
FRS D	Secondment	Strategy and Risk	Strategy Risk and Engagement	13/01/2020	26/02/2020
FRS E	Secondment	Grenfell Tower Investigation and Review Team	Grenfell Tower Investigation and Review Team	20/01/2020	26/02/2020
FRS C	Secondment	Central Operations	Establishment and Performance Team	21/02/2020	24/03/2020
FRS E	Secondment	General Counsel's Department	Governance	21/05/2020	24/06/2020
FRS E	Secondment	Fire Safety	Central Life Team	17/08/2020	22/09/2020
FRS D	Secondment	People Services	Cultural Change	01/09/2020	06/10/2020
FRS C	Secondment	Fire Safety	Primary Authority Business Group	22/10/2020	18/11/2020
FRS C	Secondment	Property Services	Access and Workplace Team	13/11/2020	21/12/2020
FRS E	Secondment	Operational Policy	Respiratory Protective Equipment Project	03/12/2020	03/03/2021
FRS B	Secondment	Fire Safety	JFIS Central Team	09/12/2020	15/01/2021
FRS C	Secondment	Fire Safety	Fire Safety Support	26/01/2021	01/03/2021
FRS B	Secondment	People Services	HR Service Centre	10/02/2021	29/03/2021

FRS E	Secondment	Training and Professional Development	Training Commissioning and Design	12/04/2021	26/05/2021
FRS B	Secondment	Property Services	Property Strategy	28/04/2021	12/05/2021
FRS C	Secondment	Information and Communications Technology	Business Intelligence	07/05/2021	09/06/2021
FRS B	Secondment	Fire Safety	FSR Administrative Support Team	07/05/2021	11/06/2021
FRS C	Secondment	Fire Safety	Primary Authority Transport Liaison Group	09/06/2021	23/06/2021
FRS C	Secondment	General Counsel's Department	Governance	10/06/2021	24/06/2021
FRS C	Secondment	Information and Communications Technology	Knowledge Management	29/06/2021	21/07/2021
FRS E	Secondment	Fire Stations	Area Teams SW	16/07/2021	10/08/2021
FRS D	Secondment	Training and Professional Development	Training Performance	16/07/2021	30/07/2021
FRS E	Secondment	Technical and Commercial	Sustainable Development	16/07/2021	19/08/2021
FRS C	Secondment	Fire Safety	Fire, Safe and Well Visits	27/08/2021	14/10/2021
FRS E	Secondment	People Services	HR Advice and Employee Relations	24/09/2021	30/11/2021
FRS D	Secondment	People Services	HR PMI	04/11/2021	10/12/2021
FRS D	Permanent/ secondment	Training Commissioning and Design	Training Commissioning Team	14/12/2021	18/01/2022
FRS D	Secondment	Health and Safety	Health and Safety	16/12/2021	18/01/2022
FRS C	Secondment	People Services	HR PMI	21/01/2022	22/02/2022
FRS C	Secondment	People Services	HR Services	04/03/2022	01/04/2022
FRS D	Secondment	TSS	Operations Support Group	05/05/2022	09/06/2022
FRS D	Secondment	People Services	Wellbeing	19/05/2022	06/07/2022
FRS D	Secondment	Strategy and Risk	Strategy Risk and Engagement	09/08/2022	TBC

With regard to questions (e) to (i), unfortunately this data is not held in an easily searchable format. The information concerned is difficult to extract in a systematic way and would require manual referencing and cross-checking of the various systems that hold such data. Due to the way our systems are set up and the data is held, our People Services Department consider this would be a lengthy exercise, likely to take significant time to complete.

The only way to review details of the secondment for each individual employee would exceed the relevant time limit set out under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). This 'fees limit' is calculated by taking the cost limit appropriate to the Brigade (i.e. £450) divided by the standard rate at which a local authority (including the Brigade) can charge for this work (£25 an hour). This equates to a total of 23.5 hours.

Using an average of 44 minutes for each record (32 records), it would take around 23.5 hours (44 minutes x 32 records divided by 60 minutes = 23.47 hours) to review all of the relevant records. I therefore confirm that the cost of providing the information you have requested is in the cost range of £587, which is greater than the "appropriate limit" of £450 as defined in the FOIA fee regulations.

By setting this out in full, this now serves as a formal 'refusal notice' based on section 12 of the FOIA. As you are aware, if the cost exceeds the appropriate limit to comply with a request, a public authority is not obliged to comply with it.

With regard to question (j), the rationale for decisions about the type of posts offered are made by the relevant line manager and the decisions are not recorded.

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/>