

Minimising thermal discomfort during summertime conditions in LFB premises - guidance

New policy number: **520**
Old instruction number: **MAN:D005:a13**
Issue date: **16 July 2007**
Reviewed as current: **12 June 2024**
Owner: **Assistant Director, Property**
Responsible work team: **Property Group**

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy provides guidance to minimise thermal discomfort during summer periods in existing buildings and provides reference information for new and refurbishment projects.
- 1.2 Following the guidance in this policy should minimise the risk of thermal discomfort in summertime conditions and will allow individuals to carry out their work activities in a safe, healthy, and productive manner.
- 1.3 Thermal discomfort in summertime conditions can be due to solar gains, internal heat gains, a possible lack of air movement and humidity levels. The mitigation of each of the above are included in this policy.
- 1.4 Use of the LFB Building Energy Management System (BEMS) is undertaken by Property and Technical Support Services (TSS) to ensure settings are optimised. The BEMS is available to all staff to view through the London Fire Brigade (LFB) Energy Portal. It shows space temperatures and records conditions to enable comparison with outside air temperatures, which will assist in assessing impact of high summertime temperatures at the LFB premises.

2 Measures to minimise thermal discomfort

- 2.1 Station staff should be enabled to dress to reduce thermal discomfort, when possible, to drink sufficient fluids and take cool breaks. Where possible staff should schedule physically demanding work tasks and exercise for cooler parts of the day.
- 2.2 Staff should turn off any unnecessary equipment to reduce heat gains. Avoiding leaving any equipment on standby, especially overnight, can cut heat gains to the space, keeping large items of equipment, such as photocopiers, out of the main occupied zones where practicable.
- 2.3 Sunlight coming through a window can generate considerable direct heat gains. Staff to keep out of direct sunlight where possible and use window blinds if provided.
- 2.4 Staff to open windows where appropriate during the day. Staff to consider implementing night-time cooling. This involves leaving windows open at night to create cross ventilation and bring in cooler air, (ensuring security is maintained). Air temperature falls overnight, and this cool air can be used to remove the build-up of heat that occurs during the day inside a room or building, by cooling the building fabric. This has shown to help reduce internal temperatures during the day. Some stations have mechanical ventilation in certain areas, and this can be used to create the same effect if left on overnight.
- 2.5 Should the average internal temperature as shown on the energy portal exceed 28°C, over a period of two consecutive days between 0800 hours and 18.00 hours, then the stations will have the option to request some additional temporary cooling units to mitigate the impact of increased temperatures. The internal temperatures are tracked and monitored on the Building Energy Management System and can be viewed on the Energy Portal on the dashboard overview. If these conditions have been met and confirmed on the Energy Portal station commanders can request temporary cooling unit(s) by raising a request on the Property Portal or contacting the Helpdesk directly. A maximum of three units can be provided per station. Station commanders must ensure that the units are positioned and used in accordance with the instructions and guidance provided and ensure they are available for collection when requested.

Document history

Assessments

An equality, sustainability or health, safety and welfare impact assessment and/or a risk assessment was last completed on:

EIA	15/03/2024	SDIA	H - 17/11/2023	HSWIA	09/01/2024	RA	
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Audit trail

Listed below is a brief audit trail, detailing amendments made to this policy/procedure.

Page/para nos.	Brief description of change	Date
Throughout	Policy reviewed as current, major wording changes made throughout including those mentioned below. Please read through to familiarise yourself with the content.	13/10/2010
Throughout	The term 'thermal discomfort' has been used which reflects the latest guidance from CIBSE in determining overheating in buildings.	
Appendix 2	The term comfort temperature has been used throughout the flow diagram.	
Appendix 4	This is a new appendix. The method for calculating comfort temperatures is detailed.	
Throughout	Department names updated in line with the Top Management Review.	26/10/2011
Page 10	Subjects list and Freedom of Information Act exemptions tables updated.	29/01/2015
Appendix 4	Alternative means of obtaining external temperatures for London has been added with a link to the Meteorological Office website.	25/10/2016
Page 1	Owner title changed to reflect the changes in organisational structure and governance due to the abolition of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority.	17/04/2019
Throughout	Reviewed as current with no changes made.	07/06/2021
Throughout	Reviewed to take account of current guidance and remove option of comfort cooling. Includes the option of the provision of temporary cooling units when certain criteria is met.	12/06/2024

Subject list

You can find this policy under the following subjects.

Energy conservation	Heat
Weather	Workplace regulations

Freedom of Information Act exemptions

This policy/procedure has been securely marked due to:

Considered by: (responsible work team)	FOIA exemption	Security marking classification