

Freedom of Information request reference number: 8484.1

Date of response: 07/03/2024

Request:

- *Incident No 014286*
- *Date of incident 24 January 2024*
- *Location Putney Bus Station*
- *Motor vehicle fire involving an electric powered single decker bus within a bus garage contained/controlled by the activation of one sprinkler head.*

Clarity would be welcome confirming the involvement, impact of the premises sprinkler system, specification of the system. The outcome of which would allow a comprehensive save to be reported specifically from the reports that the fire involved an electric powered bus. The attached images support that sprinklers were fitted within the garage however were they operational allowing the fire to be contained/controlled before the fire was extinguished by the LFB?

Your support would be welcome to provide an overview of the above-mentioned incident when completed with specific attention to the premises sprinkler system, the role it played assisting operational crews to successfully extinguish the fire by containing/controlling the fire.

Response:

A post-fire inspection was conducted at Putney Bus Garage on 31st January 2024. This focused mainly on the operations of the bus garage, the fire safety management arrangements, and the emergency plan for the premises.

Although it is understood that the sprinkler system did activate during this incident, there was not a detailed inspection of the sprinkler system. This was discussed briefly on the day with the responsible persons, and it was confirmed that this is maintained annually. I have attached a copy of the Fire Safety Audit Report for you. Personal data has been redacted in accordance with [section 40 of the FOIA – Personal Information](#).

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/>



Fire Safety Audit Report

Audit Information

Audited By [REDACTED]
Audit Completed 23 February 2024

Location summary

File No	10/011626
UPRN	100023311003
Building Name	Putney Bus Garage
Address	PUTNEY BUS GARAGE 8-10 CHELVERTON ROAD LONDON SW15 1RH
Borough	Wandsworth
Use	P - Other Premises open to public
Responsible Team	FSR Primary Authority Business Group
Station Ground	H33 - Wandsworth
Site Risk Score	9.00
Total Floors	3 Basement floors 0
Estimated number of sleeping	0
Special Features	
Additional detail	68000L diesel and 2000L oil stored on site. Smoke extract in both stair wells with break glasses at ground floor level and controls at head of stairs in both stair cases. Property has sprinkler system. This is a wet/dry system with system been charged with water during warmer months.
Premises Description	NONE
Exterior Wall Cladding	N/A
Exterior Wall Insulation	N/A
Cladding/Insulation details confirmed by	NOT CONFIRMED
Environmental Risks	NONE
Features assisting fire spread	NONE
Site Reinspection date	4 April 1991
Heritage Building	No
Balconies present?	No
Gas Supply present?	No
Petroleum redevelopment?	No
Known firesetting in area?	No
Site lone worker risk	

Property Detail

Occupier Contact	GoAhead London
Address	Putney Bus Garage Chelverton Road LONDON SW15 1RH
Responsible team	FSR Primary Authority Business Group
Occupancy Type	Sole Occupier
Property Use	P - Other Premises open to public
Valuation Office	NT - Bus Station
Original Risk Score	<u>3.00</u>
Reinspection Date	N/A (SAMPLE)
Last Inspection	19 February 2024
Total Capacity	0
Maximum number of people	<u>20-100</u>
Property Size for use	Large 1001m ² to 3300m ²
Environmental Risks	NONE
Occupant Mobility	Average
Fire Loading	Average

Additional detail

Specific lone worker risk

Primary Authority Partnership N/A

Protection Data (SHARED)

Fire Protection & Warning	Adequate
Unwanted fire signals count	0
AFD remote monitoring	No
Smoke ventilation	Natural
Covers MOE/Common areas?	Yes
Sprinklers Installed?	Yes
Sprinkler Type	Alternate
Coverage %	90
False activations in past 3 years	0
Fire activations in past 3 years	0
Access for fire-fighting	Average
Water supplies	Average
Special Features	
# Fire fighting shafts	0
Engineered solution?	No
Trade off measures?	No
Evacuation type	Simultaneous Evacuation
History of fires?	No

Contacts

Occupier - CHANGED

Name GoAhead London
Person [REDACTED]
Position Area Manager
Address No. 18 Merton High Street
 London
 SW19 1DN
Telephone [REDACTED]

Owner/Co-Owner - NEW

Name London General Transport Services Ltd
Person Company Secretary
Address 3rd Floor,
 41-51 Grey Street,
 Newcastle upon Tyne,
 NE1 6EE.

On Site Representative - CHANGED

Name GoAhead London
Person [REDACTED]
Position Engineer Manager
Address Putney Bus Garage
 Chelverton Road
 London
 SW15 1RH
Telephone [REDACTED]

Enforcement history

Articles

Article 9 - Risk assessment

SAFETY CRITICAL
Safety Evaluation
 Broadly Compliant
 Verbal Advice Given

Observations

A fire risk assessment has been carried out by Adena and covers the bus garage and the office accommodation located on site. This was carried out on 14/08/2023 and is regularly reviewed. I advised that following the bus fire, the fire risk assessment is required to be reviewed.

Article 11 - Fire Safety Arrangements

SAFETY CRITICAL
Safety Evaluation
 Broadly Compliant

Observations

At the time of the audit, it was found that the fire safety arrangements on site were managed proactively and effectively. Monthly inspections are carried out by the Health and Safety Manager, with daily checks being carried out by the engineering employees both on the day and night shifts. All fire safety paperwork was made available to me upon request, and the management team demonstrated their knowledge of the fire safety arrangements on site.

Article 13 - Detection and warning

SAFETY CRITICAL
Safety Evaluation
 Low Risk

Verbal Advice Given

Observations

At the time of the audit, it was found that a detection and warning system was installed throughout the bus garage. This included the engineering/maintenance areas, the offices and the main garage area.

I advised that detection should be installed within one of the rooms used to charge power tools. I explained that if those items are on charge and go into thermal runaway, there may be a delay in the alarm being raised.

FAILURE

Article 13(1) Fire detection commercial premises

At the time of the audit you had not provided an appropriate method of fire detection and warning within your premises. It was found that there was no detection installed within a room being used for charging lithium battery powered tools. This could delay the alarm being raised, should one of these items going into thermal runaway.

REMEDY

Provide an appropriate means of fire detection and giving warning. This can be achieved by installing appropriate fire detection when tools are being charged.

Article 14 - Emergency routes and exits

SAFETY CRITICAL
Safety Evaluation
 Broadly Compliant

Verbal Advice Given

Observations

All Exit routes were inspected with no obstructions found. Signage was displayed throughout the station and staff only areas were supplied with emergency lighting. Permanent walkways are maintained once the depot is full of vehicles.

At the time of the inspection, it was found that there was an emergency exit within the engineering workshop that led into a residential garden. It as explained that there is an arrangement with the owners of the residential property and that the exit is checked regularly. I advised that this should be reviewed on the fire risk assessment and to ensure that this arrangement is confirmed.

Article 15 - Procedures for serious and imminent danger and for danger areas

SAFETY CRITICAL
Safety Evaluation
 Broadly Compliant

Verbal Advice Given

Observations

There is an emergency plan in place for this bus garage, which covers fire evacuation and health and safety procedures. This plan also includes incidents involving electric bus fires, such as a thermal runaway event. The emergency pack also includes a set of keys which gives access to the electrical shut off in the yard of the bus garage. It was advised that a secure information box may be more appropriate for this type of site.

Fire evacuation drills are carried out quarterly both during the day and at night. The last evacuation was carried out 24/01/2024

Article 17 - Maintenance

SAFETY CRITICAL
Safety Evaluation
Broadly Compliant

Observations

At the time of the audit it was found that the fire safety systems in place on throughout the bus garage are routinely maintained:
Fire Alarm: MCP tested weekly (31/01/2024), and serviced annually with the contractor certificates stored centrally by GoAhead.
FFE: Inspected monthly (10/01/2024) and serviced annually (January 2024)
Emergency Lighting: Flick test monthly (05/07/22) and serviced annually with the contractor certificates stored centrally by GoAhead.
Sprinkler system: Serviced annually with the contractor certificates stored centrally by GoAhead.

Article 21 - Training

SAFETY CRITICAL
Safety Evaluation
Broadly Compliant

Observations

All staff members and drivers are required to carry out fire safety training prior to working in the bus garage. All drivers are provided with an induction. The training is carried out through a combination of e-learning app and refresher training on site. This includes technology training (vehicles), first aid, fire safety and evacuations, and the permit to work system. There are also a number of members on site from the engineering team that are trained as fire wardens.

Article 8 - General fire precautions

Safety Evaluation
Broadly Compliant

Observations

At the time of the audit, it was found that the ducting system installed in the canteen area. This is cleaned regularly to TR-19 standards (24/10/2023).

Article 10 - Principles of prevention to be applied

Safety Evaluation
Broadly Compliant

Observations

A sample of electrical appliances were checked to ensure that they were subject to the PAT. Generally housekeeping and waste management is of a satisfactory standard, with designated areas for bins, tyre store and material store.

Electric buses are stored and charged at this bus garage. All buses are installed with detection and suppression which is monitored by the manufacturers.

Electric charging is carried out overnight and is monitored both by members of the engineering staff and remotely by the suppliers of the charging points. There are engineering staff members present 24/7 to monitor charging and to ensure that buses are not overcharged. Safety information on all models of buses are stored within the emergency packs and have been shared with the Brigade.

Article 12 - Elimination or reduction of risks from dangerous substances

Safety Evaluation

Broadly Compliant

Observations

Due to the nature of the work that takes place on this premise, there are a number of dangerous substances stored on site, particularly in the engineering area. These include:

- Oils
- Paints
- Glues and adhesives
- Cylinders including propane and oxygen

These substances were found to be stored in restricted quantities and only in designated areas.

Article 13 - Fire Fighting Equipment

Safety Evaluation

Broadly Compliant

Observations

At the time of the inspection, it was found that fire extinguishers had been installed throughout the premises. A sprinkler system has also been installed throughout the premises.

Article 16 - Measures for dealing with dangerous substances affecting general fire precautions

Safety Evaluation

Broadly Compliant

Observations

Arrangement for use of dangerous substances include:

- Capacity limits for each drum of oils, paints and adhesives
- Designated storage areas throughout the garage, restricted only to the engineering spaces
- Spillage and COSHH risk assessments are in place
- Specific training provided to the engineering team, in the correct handling of these substances
- Cylinders are stored in designated areas in the engineering space, which has restricted staff access.
- Sources of ignition such as hot works and maintenance, take place away from designated storage areas

The emergency plan takes into consideration incidents involving spills, fires involving dangerous substances and actions to take in the event of an emergency.

Article 18 - Safety assistance

Safety Evaluation

Not Applicable

Observations

None

Article 19 - Provision of information to employees

Safety Evaluation	Observations
Not Applicable	None

Article 20 - Provision of information to employers and the self employed from outside undertakings

Safety Evaluation	Observations
Not Applicable	None

Article 22 - Co-operation and co-ordination

Safety Evaluation	Observations
Not Applicable	None

Article 23 - General duties of employees at work

Safety Evaluation	Observations
Not Applicable	None

Article 37 - Fire fighters switches for luminous tube signs

Safety Evaluation	Observations
Not Applicable	None

Article 38 - Maintenance of measures provided for protection of fire fighters

Safety Evaluation	Observations
Broadly Compliant	It was advised that a secure information box may be beneficial to assist fire crews, particularly if there is an incident out of hours. I also advised that signage should be displayed on the electrical intake, to ensure that fire crews are able to shut off the power supply during an incident.
Verbal Advice Given	

Article 24 - Power to make regulations

Safety Evaluation	Observations
Not Applicable	None

Article 27 - Powers of inspectors

Safety Evaluation	Observations
Not Applicable	None

Article 29 - Current alterations notices

Safety Evaluation	Observations
Not Applicable	None

Article 30 - Current enforcement notices

Safety Evaluation	Observations
Not Applicable	None

Article 31 - Current prohibition notices

Safety Evaluation	Observations
Not Applicable	None

Article 32 - Offences

Safety Evaluation	Observations
Not Applicable	None

Overall safety standard

Low Risk

Management compliance level

Management Compliance Level	1 - Well above average
Initial Expectation	Verbal action
Considered EMM?	Yes
Confirmed Action	Verbal action

Audit Conclusion

Date audit carried out

31/01/2023

Time of audit

11:00

Reason for audit;

Post fire inspection

Conclusion

This inspection was carried out, following an electric bus fire incident which took place on 24th January 2024 (014286-24012024). I was accompanied by Area Manager [REDACTED], and SC [REDACTED], who attended the incident. We met Engineering Manager, [REDACTED] who signed us in at the bus garage reception and was provided with HiVis Vests.

The inspection started in the engineering manager's office, where fire safety paperwork was reviewed including, the fire risk assessment, emergency plan, and testing and maintenance records. We had a conversation about the fire safety arrangements on site, as well as what happened during the incident the previous week.

This was then followed by a walkaround of the bus garage, particularly the area where the incident took place. Following the inspection there was a debrief conversation with:

- [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] from GoAhead London
- Myself, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] from LFB

Extent of premises audited

The main areas of the bus garage that were inspected were:

- Engineering Office
- Main bus garage yard
- Rear parking yard
- Engineering and Maintenance Workshop
- Incident Area (main bus garage stand)
- Reception Area

The office accommodation was not inspected on this occasion.

Justification of audit outcome

The audit outcome was "low risk", with the following verbal advice given on the day and by email to [REDACTED] following the inspection:

9 - I advised that following the bus fire, the fire risk assessment is required to be reviewed.

13(1) - I advised that detection should be installed within one of the rooms used to charge power tools. I explained that if those items are on charge and go into thermal runaway, there may be a delay in the alarm being raised.

14 - At the time of the inspection, it was found that there was an emergency exit within the engineering workshop that led into a residential garden. It was explained that there is an arrangement with the owners of

the residential property and that the exit is checked regularly. I advised that this should be reviewed on the fire risk assessment and to ensure that this arrangement is confirmed.

15 - It was advised that a secure information box may be more appropriate for this type of site and beneficial to assist fire crews, particularly if there is an incident out of hours.

38 - It was advised that signage should be displayed on the electrical intake, to ensure that fire crews are able to shut off the power supply during an incident.

Verbal Advice Given

None recorded

Other Authorities to notify

None

Weeks to Complete Work

N/A

Specific instructions for Admin to Action

None

Compliance calculation & signature

Compliance Level	1 - Well above average
Property Risk Group	C - Public unfamiliar
Life Risk	-7
Actual Risk Score	3.2
Risk Score	3.25

Audit Timings

Audit Duration
90

Travel Time
180

Post Audit Processing Duration
120