



LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

London Fire Brigade Headquarters
169 Union Street London SE1 0LL
T 020 8555 1200 F 020 7960 3602
Textphone 020 7960 3629
london-fire.gov.uk

Freedom of Information request reference number: 8052.1

Date of response: 24 November 2023

Request:

With regards to an enquiry sent to press@london-fire.gov.uk on 14 Feb 2023, 12:40 please provide:

- 1. All email, text message or other relevant information held related to LFB's response to this press enquiry. This should include all discussions between LFB staff about the response and any attached documentation shared or reviewed in relation to it. This should also include any draft responses.*

Response:

Our Press team have provided the email correspondence they hold in relation to the response they provided to this press enquiry on 15 February 2023. The box below shows the original press enquiry:

"Sent: 14 February 2023 12:40
To: >PRESS <press@london-fire.gov.uk>
Subject: Launder's Lane, Rainham, LFB report withheld from residents

Hi there,

I'm writing a story on the ongoing fires from the illegal landfill site at Launder's Lane Rainham.

I understand that LFB has a report prepared by Bureau Veritas, who undertook an in-depth study into the health risks of the site which it has not published or shared with residents.

Resident [REDACTED] believes that this report contains detailed information about the health risks of the contamination on the site, particularly when it burns.

Please could you confirm whether such a report exists and if so whether this is something that could be shared with the public or myself?

I am planning to do a story on this for Wednesday, if you have any comment about the above issue or more generally about the ongoing fire safety risks of the site please send over by 4pm tomorrow (or let me know if you need more time)."

I have attached the correspondence held by the Press team relating to the response they provided to the journalist on 15 February 2023, this includes emails provided by other LFB departments to assist the Press team with their response. Please note that personal data has been removed from the attached document under [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](#).

Correspondence between LFB and journalist:

On Wed, 15 Feb 2023 at 13:12, [REDACTED] > wrote:
Thanks [REDACTED]

In case I didn't send this before, please see the document I referred to attached. The key lines of concern are as follows:

Lead concentration of 1600mg/kg at 1.2mgbl exceeding the GAC for commercial use of 750mc/kg.

Benzo(a)pyrene at 2.1mg/kg exceeding end use for residential of 1mg/kg

This implies that, in these areas, material exists which could pose a risk to human health in an industrial or residential end use scenario.

Best,

[REDACTED]

On Wed, 15 Feb 2023 at 12:31, [REDACTED] @london-fire.gov.uk > wrote:
Hi [REDACTED]

Good to speak to you just now. This is our latest position on this ongoing issue. As mentioned, we are not aware of any report having been produced by our scientific advisors Bureau Veritas.

A London Fire Brigade spokesperson said: "Crews from Havering and surrounding boroughs have attended more than 70 fires at the site on Launder's Lane in Rainham since 2018.

"The fires are distressing for the local community and are putting firefighters at unnecessary risk. The reason the fires are happening regularly is due to the build-up of heat from rubbish dumped at the site over a long period of time.

"Local communities deserve a long-term solution to the problem and we are part of a working group, alongside the council and the Environment Agency, that seeks to resolve this long-running issue.

"We will continue to send crews to assess the fire and we will respond appropriately so firefighters can ensure the fire does not spread any further."

Thank you

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 February 2023 12:40
To: >PRESS <press@london-fire.gov.uk>
Subject: Launder's Lane, Rainham, LFB report withheld from residents

Hi there,

I'm writing a story on the ongoing fires from the illegal landfill site at Launder's Lane Rainham.

I understand that LFB has a report prepared by Bureau Veritas, who undertook an in-depth study into the health risks of the site which it has not published or shared with residents.

Resident [REDACTED] believes that this report contains detailed information about the health risks of the contamination on the site, particularly when it burns.

Please could you confirm whether such a report exists and if so whether this is something that could be shared with the public or myself?

I am planning to do a story on this for Wednesday, if you have any comment about the above issue or more generally about the ongoing fire safety risks of the site please send over by 4pm tomorrow (or let me know if you need more time).

Best regards,

--

██████████

[Internal LFB correspondence:](#)

From: ██████████@london-fire.gov.uk>
Sent: 15 February 2023 12:12
To: ██████████@london-fire.gov.uk>
Cc: ██████████@london-fire.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Launder's Lane, Rainham, LFB report withheld from residents

Good Afternoon ██████████

I have managed to find the summary email from Bureau Veritas which was sent to me last year. This email confirms that no report was produced.

Having spoken with ██████████, he is in agreement that we should seek guidance from legal prior to sending any information – therefore, once you have their advice I will forward the email.

Regards

██████████

██████████

Group Commander – Hazmat Lead

From: ██████████@london-fire.gov.uk>
Sent: 14 February 2023 18:12
To: ██████████@london-fire.gov.uk>
Cc: ██████████@london-fire.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: Launder's Lane, Rainham, LFB report withheld from residents

Hi ██████████ I have not spoken with legal yet no. There's no intention to share any emails externally but I will liaise with legal regardless.

Many thanks

██████████

From: ██████████@london-fire.gov.uk>
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2023 5:33:28 PM
To: ██████████@london-fire.gov.uk>
Cc: ██████████@london-fire.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Launder's Lane, Rainham, LFB report withheld from residents

Many thanks ██████████

I will take a look and find the email I referred to in our phone call, I can confirm that no report (detailed or otherwise) was prepared for this incident and the email only related to findings recorded by Bureau Veritas (who are our contracted Scientific Advisers) – however, I would strongly recommend taking legal advice from our own legal team prior to sharing this information with a third party, can you confirm if this has been done?

Many thanks

██████████

[REDACTED]
Group Commander – Hazmat Lead

From: [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@london-fire.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@london-fire.gov.uk)>
Sent: 14 February 2023 17:09
To: [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@london-fire.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@london-fire.gov.uk)>
Subject: Fw: Launder's Lane, Rainham, LFB report withheld from residents

Hi [REDACTED]

This is the email that we have received about Launder's Lane. If you are able to share details of involvement Bureau Veritas has had on this site, such as that email you mentioned, that would be useful.

Thank you
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 February 2023 12:40
To: >PRESS <press@london-fire.gov.uk>
Subject: Launder's Lane, Rainham, LFB report withheld from residents

Hi there,

I'm writing a story on the ongoing fires from the illegal landfill site at Launder's Lane Rainham.

I understand that LFB has a report prepared by Bureau Veritas, who undertook an in-depth study into the health risks of the site which it has not published or shared with residents.

Resident [REDACTED] believes that this report contains detailed information about the health risks of the contamination on the site, particularly when it burns.

Please could you confirm whether such a report exists and if so whether this is something that could be shared with the public or myself?

I am planning to do a story on this for Wednesday, if you have any comment about the above issue or more generally about the ongoing fire safety risks of the site please send over by 4pm tomorrow (or let me know if you need more time).

Best regards,
--
[REDACTED]