

**Freedom of Information request:** Reference number FOI2025/00245

**Date of request:** 13th March

**Request:**

My FOI is:

1. When was the decision made to stop the book swap at TFL stations?
2. Who made that decision?
3. Whether inspections were carried out to assess fire safety risks at stations having book swaps (I understand from LBC today that Clapham North and Oval are two more stations)
4. If inspections were not carried out, why not and why impose a blanket ban?
5. Provide all paperwork and records showing how the decision was reached and distributed.

**Response:**

These questions all relate to decisions made by Transport for London (TfL), who are best placed to respond. TfL are responsible for the fire risk assessments (and the decisions) therefore London Fire Brigade (LFB) are unable to answer this question.

LFB are the regulator under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and are the (fire safety) regulator for London's transport infrastructure. LFB will inspect sites for compliance and will work with the responsible person (e.g. TfL in this case) as part of this process, including reviewing revised risk assessments where appropriate.

The London Fire Brigade has been working closely with TfL on the decision to suspend the book swap scheme due to fire safety concerns and reviewed the decision.

The leaders of both LFB and TfL are committed to ensuring we learn from past tragedies and take every step to keep people safe. Therefore, it was right to review the use of book libraries and work together, as we have done, to examine the risk posed and explore ways to mitigate it. We have found a way forward that will allow book libraries to operate, while protecting the safety of all those travelling and working on London Underground.

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/>