

Freedom of Information request: Reference number FOI2026/00894

Date of request: 30th July 2026

Request:

I am writing to request the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Scope. This request concerns officers of the command ranks of Station Commander and above (Station Commander, Group Commander, Deputy Assistant Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner and Commissioner, or their equivalents). It does not concern Leading Firefighter, Sub Officer or Station Officer ranks. Where the Brigade's own documents use the word "officer" more broadly, please answer by reference to the command ranks identified above.

I am requesting named policy documents, system information, data fields and retention information only. I am not requesting any personal data, and I am not requesting any information relating to any identified or identifiable individual. I have already reviewed Policy number 367 and Policy number 879 as published on your website, and this request does not duplicate them.

Each numbered item below is a request for a single discrete document or a single point of factual information.

1. A copy of Policy number 232 - Availability of personnel, appliances and equipment, in its current version.
2. A copy of Policy number 327 - Guidance for senior managers in relation to mobilising and rota management, in its current version.
3. A copy of Policy number 439 - Covering absences of uniformed officers, in its current version.
4. A copy of the current procedure or user guidance for the Staff Attendance Recording System (StARS) in so far as it relates to the recording of officers' duty status, availability and location - including any guidance on the "roll call board" function referred to at paragraph 9.1 of Policy number 412.
5. A copy of Policy number 412 - Mobilising policy, in its current version. For the avoidance of doubt I am not requesting Appendix 4, or any information concerning senior officer mobilising thresholds or predetermined attendance levels, and I would be content to receive the policy with that appendix withheld.
6. Paragraph 2.9 of Policy number 412 states that Brigade Control "will always aim to send the closest available resource (appliances and officers)", and paragraph 9.1 requires officers to inform Brigade Control of any changes in their availability, capability (attribute) or location. Please state how the location or proximity of an officer of Station Commander rank or above is established at the point of mobilising - that is, whether it is taken from a self-declared entry in StARS, from a declaration to Brigade Control, from vehicle or device location data, or by some other means. If this is set out in any document, a copy of that document would be a sufficient answer.
7. In relation to officer cars or staff cars (as distinct from fire appliances), please state whether either of

the following is recorded, and by which system: (a) satellite navigation or AVLS/GPS vehicle location data; (b) radio status data. I am asking only whether such data is recorded and in which system - not for any data itself.

8. The Brigade's published records retention schedule (Policy number 879, issue date 29 September 2015, as released under reference 8932.2) contains an entry for "IM Corporate systems - StARS, Station Diary, Incident Management System (IMS) etc." but appears to contain no entry for mobilising or command-and-control system records, for AVLS or vehicle location data, or for rostering or officer availability data. Please state:

(a) the retention period applied to each of those three categories of record, and where it is documented;

(b) whether Policy number 879 has been superseded or replaced since 29 September 2015, and if so please provide the current schedule;

(c) whether the retention period applied to StARS data has changed in the last five years, and if so what the previous period was and when it changed.

9. Where any record described above is held by a third party or contracted supplier on the Brigade's behalf, please state that fact and identify the category of record concerned.

If any of these documents are already published, a link would be a sufficient response for that item. If you consider that any single item would exceed the appropriate cost limit under section 12, please answer the remaining items and advise me how that item could be refined - I would not wish the whole request to be treated as one aggregated request where each item is a discrete named document.

I look forward to your response within 20 working days.

Response:

Further to your request, please see below for a response to your request of the following LFB policy documents.

1. A copy of Policy number 232 - Availability of personnel, appliances and equipment, in its current version.

Please see below for a copy of PN232 - Availability of personnel, appliances and equipment.

2. A copy of Policy number 327 - Guidance for senior managers in relation to mobilising and rota management, in its current version.

Please see below for a copy of PN327 - Guidance for senior managers in relation to mobilising and rota management.

3. A copy of Policy number 439 - Covering absences of uniformed officers, in its current version.

Please see below for a copy of PN439 - Covering absences of uniformed officers policy.

4. A copy of the current procedure or user guidance for the Staff Attendance Recording System (StARS) in so far as it relates to the recording of officers' duty status, availability and location - including any guidance on the "roll call board" function referred to at paragraph 9.1 of Policy number 412.

Details of the roll call is a paragraph on the internal LFB intranet, which is included below. LFB do not have any current guidance or policy. The recording of an officer's duty status is recorded on the Vision

system. Any changes in availability or location are often done over the phone with LFB Control team. Watches can make limited changes of their capabilities via the roll call board.

To access the Roll Call board:

- *Double-click on the Rotabook Icon on your desktop*
- *Choose the Roll Call button on the toolbar (FF Helmet)*
- *The Roll Call screen will appear*

The Roll Call board is only available when logged on at a station location.

5. A copy of Policy number 412 - Mobilising policy, in its current version. For the avoidance of doubt I am not requesting Appendix 4, or any information concerning senior officer mobilising thresholds or predetermined attendance levels, and I would be content to receive the policy with that appendix withheld.

This policy is withheld under [section 21 of the FOIA – information accessible by other means](#). This policy is accessible online using the following link: <https://london-fire.disclosurelog.co.uk/disclosures/66d26b46-f34d-440f-9055-e556ab8f8243?preserveHistory>.

6. Paragraph 2.9 of Policy number 412 states that Brigade Control "will always aim to send the closest available resource (appliances and officers)", and paragraph 9.1 requires officers to inform Brigade Control of any changes in their availability, capability (attribute) or location. Please state how the location or proximity of an officer of Station Commander rank or above is established at the point of mobilising - that is, whether it is taken from a self-declared entry in StARS, from a declaration to Brigade Control, from vehicle or device location data, or by some other means. If this is set out in any document, a copy of that document would be a sufficient answer.

LFB Control use information from the Vision system to determine, which officers are available at any given time.

7. In relation to officer cars or staff cars (as distinct from fire appliances), please state whether either of the following is recorded, and by which system: (a) satellite navigation or AVLS/GPS vehicle location data; (b) radio status data. I am asking only whether such data is recorded and in which system - not for any data itself.

8. The Brigade's published records retention schedule (Policy number 879, issue date 29 September 2015, as released under reference 8932.2) contains an entry for "IM Corporate systems - StARS, Station Diary, Incident Management System (IMS) etc." but appears to contain no entry for mobilising or command-and-control system records, for AVLS or vehicle location data, or for rostering or officer availability data. Please state:

(a) the retention period applied to each of those three categories of record, and where it is documented;

(b) whether Policy number 879 has been superseded or replaced since 29 September 2015, and if so please provide the current schedule;

(c) whether the retention period applied to StARS data has changed in the last five years, and if so what the previous period was and when it changed.

LFB does not have any formal documentation on retaining data in relation to mobilising and the command and control system records. The retention period of a current employee will stay on the system throughout their working career. Once an employee leaves, their data is removed automatically from view in the front end system after three years. Previously, audit logs were kept up to three years and a backup of the data was kept for up to 7 years. On our current new servers, LFB can retain the data for longer periods.

9. Where any record described above is held by a third party or contracted supplier on the Brigade's behalf, please state that fact and identify the category of record concerned.

All data is held within LFB.

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/>

Availability of personnel, appliances and equipment

New policy number: 232
Old instruction number: ON166
Issue date: 20 July 1998
Reviewed as current: 9 January 2024
Owner: Assistant Commissioner, Fire Stations
Responsible work team: Central Operations

Contents

1	Availability of personnel.....	2
2	Availability of appliances.....	3
3	Availability of equipment.....	3
	Appendix 1 - Roll call board	5
	Appendix 2 – Nominal roll board	6
	Document history.....	7

1 Availability of personnel

Roll call board

- 1.1 Watch officers must ensure that the Roll Call Board for their next duty shift is prepared before the end of each duty shift; and that it is displayed in a prominent position at the station. Appendix 1 provides an illustration and full description of the Roll Call Board.
- 1.2 Following Roll Call, the Roll Call Board relating to the on-duty watch must continue to be displayed in a prominent position (usually within the watch room) and kept updated throughout that duty.
- 1.3 The Control Operational Resourcing and Events (CORE) Team is responsible for monitoring and managing the availability of personnel. The CORE Team will collect the figures relating to the future availability of personnel from each station. After taking action to redress any imbalance in the availability of personnel, the CORE Team will enter the information into the Brigade Control mobilising computer system.
- 1.4 Watch officers are to ensure that subsequent alterations to the future availability of personnel (including personnel delayed attending for duty) are immediately passed to the CORE Team and a note made on the appropriate Roll Call Board. If there is a change in the future availability of a leading firefighter (LFF) previously shown as available, the CORE Team are to amend the Brigade Control record.
- 1.5 To ensure that the information recorded on the Roll Call Board is correct, an on-coming watch officer is to check the Roll Call Board, and if necessary, make any changes considered appropriate.

Nominal roll board

- 1.6 The purpose of the Nominal Roll Board is to record the role and names of personnel riding each appliance. This allows an accurate roll call of personnel to be taken at an incident.
- 1.7 Before each change of watch, the duty firefighter is to prepare the Nominal Roll Board(s) for the on-coming watch. Information is to be entered on to the board in black chinagraph.
- 1.8 Immediately after Roll Call, the duty firefighter must hand the Nominal Roll Board(s) to the appropriate appliance commander(s) who should verify that the details recorded are correct. Each appliance commander is to place the Nominal Roll Board in the correct stowage position on the appropriate appliance.
- 1.9 The duty firefighter is responsible for amending the Nominal Roll Board(s) immediately following a change of riders at the station. All changes must also be recorded on the Roll Call Board.
- 1.10 Operational staff are reminded of the importance in maintaining accurate records of personnel when attending the incident ground in nonemergency or specialist response vehicles i.e., attending reliefs immediately after change of watch. Those staff without nominal roll boards being transported by other means (by brigade vehicle or on foot) to an incident should proceed immediately to the CU on arrival at the incident ground to ensure they are added to the correct nominal roll board. Operational staff being relieved at the incident must ensure that they collect their nominal roll board prior to departure from the incident. Individual staff members required to leave the incident ground for other reasons such as medical, domestic, or assisting other agencies remote from the incident ground, must gain permission from the Incident Commander (IC) and ensure their details are amended/removed from their nominal roll board.

- 1.11 An individual reporting for duty at the station, leaving the station, or changing rider positions is responsible for making the appropriate Nominal Roll Board available to the duty firefighter so that it can be amended. The same individual is also responsible for checking and returning the Nominal Roll Board to the correct appliance once it has been amended.
- 1.12 Where a mutual exchange of a LFF takes place prior to Roll Call, the duty firefighter must notify the OIC who will amend and update STARS accordingly.
- 1.13 STARS is to be updated for all changes in the role or name of appliance commanders. Staff at the CORE Team are to ensure that arrangements are in place to check that information held on the mobilising system has been correctly updated following late changes, ordering of standby officers, etc.

2 Availability of appliances

Managing and monitoring

- 2.1 Managing and monitoring the availability of the appliances within each area is the responsibility of the CORE Team. Watch officers at stations must ensure that they update STARS accordingly and inform the CORE Team if an appliance is taken 'off the run' or placed back 'on the run'.

Prior permission should be sought to place an appliance 'off the run', for a drill or other training event, this should be carried out in line with policy number 517 - Strategic resource.
- 2.2 The CORE Team and Control and Mobilising have a responsibility to ensure the area business sheet is correctly completed on the Brigade Control mobilising system in advance of the pre-arranged event.
- 2.3 Officers undertaking Strategic Resource activities must ensure they are able to be contacted by pager or the appliance mobile phone, or if it is unavailable or out of signal, then a pre-arranged telephone number, (except when the activity takes place at a Brigade establishment or a Command Unit is in attendance and maintaining a radio listening watch). Permission must therefore be sought from Brigade Control by telephone immediately prior to any Strategic Resource being commenced and a pager test (where appropriate) requested on arrival at the location of the outside activity. Special appliances may be allowed on Strategic Resource, subject to the exigencies of the Brigade.
- 2.4 The manager at Brigade Control may delay or cancel any or all Strategic Resource activities whenever operational needs dictate.
- 2.5 The number of pumping appliances within each area allowed to be placed on Strategic Resource availability at any one time is regulated, details can be obtained from the CORE Team.
- 2.6 To accommodate major exercises, the total number of appliances which may be placed on Strategic Resource availability for each area may be exceeded provided other area totals are reduced.
- 2.7 Co-ordination of appliances available during major exercises will be organised jointly between the CORE Team, Training Programming (TPR), Establishment and Performance Team, Control and Mobilising, and the Assistant Commissioners.

3 Availability of equipment

Equipment carried on appliances

- 3.1 A pumping appliance must be taken off the run if:

- It has less than 2 BA sets available for use.
- It is not equipped with either a 135 or 9m ladder.

Note: a DPL will not be considered off the run if for any reason the 9m ladder is unavailable.

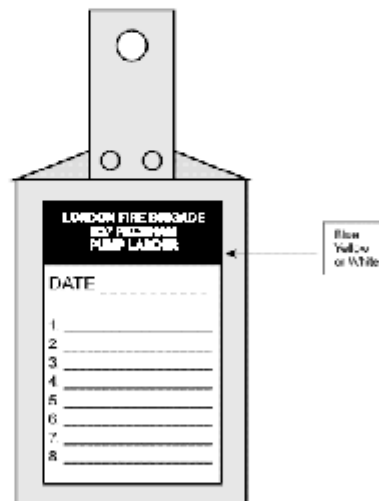
- 3.2 Appliance officers are to ensure that Brigade Control is updated immediately there is a change in the availability of any major item of equipment carried on an appliance (see paragraph 3.3 below). Equipment classified as being a 'Major Item' will include:
- 135 ladder or 9 Metre Ladder (see 3.1 above);
 - Gas Tight Suits;
 - RTC Equipment (Holmatro Rapid Intervention Equipment);
 - The appliance Main Scheme Radio;
 - Thermal Image Camera; or
 - Lifejackets.
- 3.3 If away from the station, an appliance officer is to transmit information to Brigade Control by RT whenever there is a change of equipment availability. If the appliance Main Scheme Radio becomes defective, Brigade Control must be informed immediately by appliance mobile phone and confirmed on return to station.
- 3.4 If **any part** of the RTC Equipment, e.g., the Holmatro rapid intervention equipment becomes defective, the appliance commander must first notify Brigade Control that the appliance is without RTC equipment and then ensure that all the Holmatro equipment is removed from the appliance. Other items of equipment associated with RTC equipment are to remain on the appliance.
- 3.5 Where possible, watch officers are to make arrangements to replace items of defective equipment via SAP or by contacting Babcock Critical Services.

Appendix 2 – Nominal roll board

- 1 Each nominal roll board consists of a metal holder containing two inserts. The upper insert is colour coded and bears the permanent inscription "London Fire Brigade" together with the station number and the type of appliance.
 - 2 The colour of the upper insert and scale of issue are as follows:
 - **White** - 1 board per station based appliance or command vehicle, denotes day shift personnel.
 - **Blue** - 1 board per station based appliance or command vehicle, denotes night shift personnel.
 - **Yellow** - 1 board per vehicle - denotes any other Brigade vehicles, including area vans, senior officer cars, etc.
- Note:** Reserve nominal roll boards are carried on command units. All reserve nominal roll call boards have yellow inserts.
- 3 The lower insert is white, double sided and has space for the roles and names of the crews to be entered.

A nominal roll board is illustrated in Fig. 2 below.

Figure 2 - Nominal roll board



Document history

Assessments

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

EIA	08/01/2024	SDIA	23/10/2023	HSWIA	16/10/2023	RA	NA
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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
Page 2, para 1.10	Changes made to paragraph 1.10.	06/01/2021
Page 2, para 1.10	Paragraph updated to ensure a current record of the whereabouts of all staff is maintained.	02/03/2022
Throughout	Reviewed and minor updates throughout.	09/01/2024
Throughout	References to RMC updated to the CORE Team.	28/08/2025

Subject list

You can find this policy under the following subjects.

Appliances	Equipment – operational
Nominal roll board	Second line

Freedom of Information Act exemptions

This policy/procedure has been securely marked due to:

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

Guidance for senior managers in relation to mobilising and rota management

New policy number:	327
Old instruction number:	ON167 Supplement 1
Issue date:	21 May 2003
Reviewed as current:	11 September 2023
Owner:	Assistant Commissioner, Fire Stations
Responsible work team:	Central Operations

Contents

1	Introduction	2
2	Operational cover	5
3	Management of the rota.....	5
4	Manager's details.....	7
5	Arrangements for leave and other absences.....	9
6	Status seven (category one and two responders).....	12
7	Brigade pool car arrangements.....	13
8	Mobilising arrangements.....	13
9	Contact numbers	14
	Document history.....	15

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy provides guidance and assistance to senior managers who form part of the consolidated flexible duty system (FDS) and should be read in conjunction with Policy number 486 – Annual leave and public holidays policy – operational staff.
- 1.2 Since the introduction of the FDS in 1984 the protocols and procedures related to the running of that rota have evolved. These are managed by the Establishment and Performance Team (EPT) and Control Operational Resourcing and Event (CORE) Team out of hours located at Stratford.

Flexible duty system (FDS).

- 1.3 The FDS follows a four-week cycle. It comprises four rota groups and is replicated in each of the two geographically managed areas (North and South). These are called "notional cover areas". Each of the four rota groups in the North (a combination of what was formerly known as the West and East) are populated with a minimum of 10 group commanders and 23 station commanders, whereas the South has a minimum of 5 group commanders and 12 station commanders. This allows for a Brigade wide total of 60 group commanders and 140 station commanders, which will provide a realistic minimum cover within those areas, which is further supported by the deputy assistant commissioner rota. Managers will normally be expected to be available for mobilising during the times and conditions set out below in paragraphs 2.2 and 2.3.
- 1.4 The 9 hour duty is classed as "managerial" hours. Days commence at 08:00 hrs and finish at 17:00 hrs. The 9+ hour duty (for station commanders) is also classed as "managerial" hours, however days commence at 11:00hrs and finish at 20:00hrs. The 9- duty is also classified as managerial hours and has a start/finish time of 07:00hrs and finishes at 16:00.
- 1.5 When managers perform their 24 hour duty the following conditions apply:

24 hr duties Monday to Friday	Managerial	=	08:00-17:00 hrs
	Standby	=	17:00-08:00 hrs
24 hr duties Saturday and Sundays	Managerial	=	08:00-19:30 hrs
	Standby	=	19:30-08:00 hrs

Managerial roles

- 1.6 All managers attached to the FDS will be expected to carry out the normal incident command/monitoring role. In addition to this, managers will perform a minimum of two of the following specialist functions (attributes) commensurate with their individual skills and qualifications:
 - (a) Urban search and rescue advisor - (UA).
 - (b) Fire safety officer - (FS).
 - (c) Hazardous materials environmental protection officer - (HMEPO).
 - (d) Scotland Yard liaison officer - (CT).
 - (e) National interagency liaison officer - (NILO).
 - (f) Officer of the day - (OD).
 - (g) Senior accident investigator - (SAI).
 - (h) Line rescue/water rescue advisor (TAR).
 - (i) Operational Review Team (ORT).

- (j) Bulk media advisor (TAB).
- (k) Press liaison officer (PR).
- (l) Specialist entry recovery team (SERT).
- (m) Wildfire support officer (WSO)

The NILO, ORT and the UA/TAR attributes will each count as two attributes.

1.7 The system will operate as follows:

- (a) Two OD officers at SC level will be required Brigade wide as a minimum for each 24 hour shift. The role of the officer of the day (OD) is to act as the initial representatives of principal management in ensuring that Brigade resources, both human and physical, are deployed on a strategic basis to best effect and dealing with any other issues which may affect the Brigade. ODs are at station commander level. Under normal circumstances two ODs will be assigned on each 24 hour duty and will be designated as OD1 and OD2. The OD1 will attend CORE Team in the morning of a shift to carry out their duties however, if authorised by EPT, OD1 may work remotely as per the directive. The OD1 role is exclusive meaning the officer will not mobilised to any incident. The OD is still to attend Brigade Control for eight pump incidents (and above) and during other periods of note or because CORE Team/OOW need a SC at CORE Team/LOC on that day for business continuity. OD2 is a dual role i.e. command role or the OD. OD1 and 2 should work together and OD2 should take on some of the OD duties during busy periods or when required.
- (b) The current minimum requirement is x 1 ORT with the maximum requirement of x 2 ORT per 24 hour shift. EPT work on the maximum level of cover of two and this will be reached with additional duties if required. The ORT role is an exclusive duty meaning the officer will be held in reserve and only mobilised to an incident as a result of their ORT attribute.
- (c) Three FS officers at SC or GC level will be required Brigade wide as a minimum for each 24 hour shift. Managers will be mobilised to provide specialist fire safety advice to incident commanders at operational incidents. They will also be informed of all alleged fire risks via CORE Team. The FS role is non-exclusive meaning the officer will have a dual role when on duty i.e. command role or the FS role.
- (d) Two HMEPO officers at SC or GC level will be required (1 North and 1 South) as a minimum for each 24 hour shift. The hazardous materials and environmental protection officer's (HMEPO) role will only be performed by officers that have successfully completed the required training from the Fire Service College and have been assessed as competent. The HMEPO role is non-exclusive meaning the officer will have a dual role when on duty i.e. command role or the HMEPO role.
- (e) Two GT officers at SC level will be required Brigade wide as a minimum for each 24 hour shift. The Scotland Yard liaison officer's (GT) role will, under normal circumstances, only be performed by officers who have successfully completed the required training from the Metropolitan Police Service at Scotland Yard, and have been assessed as competent. The GT role is non-exclusive meaning the officer will have a dual role when on duty i.e. command role or the GT role.
- (f) Three NILO officers at SC or GC level will be required Brigade wide as a minimum for each 24 hour shift one of whom will be designated NILO which will be an exclusive duty meaning the officer will be held in reserve and only mobilised to an incident as a result of their NILO attribute. The national interagency liaison officer (NILO) role will be carried out

by officers who have successfully completed the appropriate training. In addition 4 NILO officers will be required on recall for that shift.

- (g) Two SAI officers at SC or GC level will be required Brigade wide as a minimum for each 24 hour shift. The senior accident investigator's (SAI) role will be carried out by officers who have received the necessary training for this role. The SAI role is non-exclusive meaning the officer will have a dual role when on duty i.e. command role or the SAI role. SAs shall discharge their SAI duties as per Policy number 368 - Health, safety and environmental event investigation policy (personal injuries, near misses and traffic accidents) and the SAI manual. In conjunction with their SAI duties.
- (h) Three UA officers at SC or GC level (at least 1 of whom must be on a 24 hour shift, the other 2 may be on recall) will be required Brigade wide as a minimum for each 24 hour shift. The urban search and rescue advisor (UA) will be carried out by station or group commanders who have received the appropriate training. They are to support operations in which USAR assets have responded or where USAR assets would bring benefit to an incident. In both cases the role of the UA is to provide advice to the IC on options or solutions in a USAR context. The UA role is non-exclusive meaning the officer will have a dual role when on duty i.e. command role or the UA role.
- (i) One TAR officer at SC or GC level will be required Brigade wide as a minimum for each 24 hour shift. The technical rescue tactical advisor (TAR) will be performed by station/group commanders and will provide advice and guidance regarding all operational aspects of deployment of specialist teams for line operations, water rescue/flood operations and large animal rescue. Providing support and guidance to incident commanders at incidents requiring technical rescue. The TAR role is non-exclusive meaning the officer will have a dual role when on duty i.e. command role or the TAR role.
- (j) One TAB officer at SC or GC level will be required Brigade wide as a minimum for each 24 hour shift. The bulk media advisors (BMA) role will be carried out by SC/GC's to provide incident commanders with the support and guidance with regards to the provision of large quantities of water to - or the removal of firefighting run off or flood waters from the incident ground. They also have specific training in the production and application of bulk foam supplies. The TAB role is non-exclusive meaning the officer will have a dual role when on duty i.e. command role or the TAB role.
- (k) Two SRT officer at SC or GC level will be required Brigade wide as a minimum for each 24 hour shift. A minimum of four officers at SC or GC level will be required on recall. The specialist entry recovery team role will be carried out by SC/GC's who have received specific training and deemed confident to provide advice and support at MTFA incidents
- (l) Two press liaison officers (PR) at SC level (1 North and 1 South) will be required as a minimum The press liaison officer role will be carried out by SC's who have received specific training in releasing information to the media through televised interviews and/or written statements. The officer will also feed incident information back to the on duty Brigade press team.
- (m) Two WSO's will be required Brigade wide for any 24 hour period. The Wildfire Support Officer (WSO) role will be carried out by SC/GC's to provide incident commanders with support and guidance regarding wildfires/fires in the open, including grass fires. The WSO role is non-exclusive meaning the officer will have a dual role when on duty i.e. command role or the WSO role. Cover can be reduced to one WSO Brigade wide for any 24 hour period where the risk of wildfire is reduced.
- (n) All station commander may be utilised to carry out other key functions for example:

- (i) As nominated local accident investigation officer/hospital liaison officer.
 - (ii) Other liaison duties as determined by the Duty DAC/AC (AC 1) commensurate with their role maps.
- 1.8 Any officer wishing to relinquish a skill/attribute will be able to do so where there are verifiable medical reasons supported by the Brigade's occupational health advisors. In any case, the officer must give a minimum of three month's notice of their desire to relinquish, outlining the reasons for seeking to relinquish. Relinquishing their skill/attribute will otherwise be by mutual agreement and management will not unreasonably withhold that agreement so long as the requirements set out in the paragraphs above in regard to sufficient numbers are met.
- 1.9 Staff will be expected to maintain the necessary standards, as specified by the appropriate lead officer for that attribute, to ensure they are able to meet the requirements of their skill/attribute.
- 1.10 Where withdrawal of a skill/attribute means the officer will reduce to less than two skills/attributes, then the officer must agree with management, which replacement skill/attribute they will undertake.
- 1.11 Staff on light duties (LD) although not covering the operational rota can carry out a non-exclusive role.

2 Operational cover

- 2.1 The number of managers available to provide operational cover for each 24 hour duty within the North notional cover area shall be:

Minimum numbers	Actual numbers required (see paragraph 3.3)
6 x group commanders	7 x group commanders
14 x station commanders	15 x station commanders

- 2.2 The number of managers available to provide operational cover for each 24 hour duty within the South notional cover area shall be:

Minimum numbers	Actual numbers required (see paragraph 3.3)
3 x group commanders	4 x group commanders
7 x station commanders	8 x station commanders

- 2.3 To provide some resilience and ensure the minimum officer levels as stated in paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2 are maintained, the SC and GC rotas (North and South) each have an actual number required which will be maintained up to 08:00 hours for each shift. This is effectively a leave buffer, which increases the minimum levels by 1 officer on each rota.

This buffer will allow the provision of additional leave to be requested and granted on the day at 08:00 hours subject to the exigencies of the service.

3 Management of the rota

Balancing the rotas

- 3.1 The EPT will continuously review the levels of managers required for the rota, and may when circumstances dictate, move managers from one rota group to another (including notional cover area) to maintain an even spread of operational and specialist cover.

- 3.2 The criteria for moving managers in order to meet the minimum requirements are listed below in the following order of priority:
- (a) A temporary station commander who utilises a Brigade call out base.
 - (b) A station or group commander who is either substantive or is on a development programme and utilises a Brigade call out base.
 - (c) A temporary station commander who provides their own call out base.
 - (d) A station or group commander who is on a development programme/substantive and provides a private call out base.
- 3.3 Manager(s) taking up a post will normally assume the rota of the manager vacating that position.
- 3.4 **Additional duties to maintain the operational rota**
- (a) Other than in cases where the GC rota needs to be supplemented for 8 days or more, in which case **covering the next higher role**, paragraph 4.5 applies in the first instance, then the Brigade will seek volunteers to perform additional duties to maintain the operational rota from any SC or GC where there is a requirement to supplement the SC or GC operational rota, and a mutual exchange is not possible.
 - (b) The Brigade will contact all relevant officers as soon as the requirement for additional duties is known, and based on volunteers, will allocate the duty to the officer who has undertaken the least additional duties in the past 12 months. The Brigade will maintain a register of those officers who have undertaken such duties to ensure that staff work within the working time directive. Individual officers also need to maintain their own records to ensure they work within the working time directive.
 - (c) Officers performing additional duties to maintain the operational rota will be paid their flat hourly rate multiplied by the number of extra hours providing operational cover, multiplied by 50% when converting a 9 hour duty to a 24 hour duty; or by 60% when converting a RL duty to a 24 hour duty.
 - (d) Where an officer requires leave, a mutual exchange should be sought in the first instance. Where no mutual exchanges are possible, and:
 - (i) the rota group is under established by two or more through sickness, light duties and/or vacancies;
 - (ii) and the under establishment is not being addressed by covering the next higher role arrangements;
 - (iii) then that rota group will be allowed to go one under the minimum numbers as stated in (paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2) and the arrangements for additional duties will apply.
 - (e) Officers performing additional duties under these arrangements will either convert a 9 hour/9 minus or 9+ hour duty to a 24 hour duty or work a 24 hour duty on a rota leave.
 - (f) Competent SCs and GCs, and SCs and GCs on development may undertake additional duties; this includes those officers on scheduled rota leave, virtual leave or recall exchange.
 - (g) As much notice as practicable will normally be given to staff of the opportunity to perform an additional duty. Officers will be eligible for mileage payments in the normal way. Officers without an agreed camp out base within the GLA area on the shift they are being

required to work, may apply for use of a camp out base. No additional expenses will be paid.

- (h) The Brigade may not cancel the requirement for additional duties within 48 hours of the commencement of the shift for which the payment refers; otherwise the Brigade may cancel without payment being made.
- (i) Once an individual agrees to cover an extra shift/s they will be contractually obliged to attend for that duty.

3.5 Covering the next higher role

- (a) Where it is anticipated that the GC operational rota will need to be supplemented for more than seven consecutive shifts, or there have been no volunteers to supplement the GC rota in accordance with additional duties to maintain the operational rota (paragraph 4.4).
- (b) A SC who has successfully completed all aspects of the GC assessment process, may be offered the opportunity to cover the operational rota of that higher role.

4 Manager's details

4.1 On taking up a post covered by the FDS rota, managers **must** provide the following details to the Establishment and Performance Team:

- (a) Name.
- (b) Call sign.
- (c) Post.
- (d) Line manager/contact person.
- (e) Qualifications (FS, HMEPO etc.)
- (f) Contact Numbers for office and standby call-out base.
- (g) Full address of their nominated standby call-out base location.
- (h) Brigade vehicle details.

4.2 These details are required for mobilising purposes and the administration of leave.

Note: Once managers have been assessed as competent and/or received the requisite training to perform one of the specialist qualifications mentioned previously including operational roles, it is their responsibility to inform the Establishment and Performance Team, who will then update their qualifications.

Manager's responsibilities

4.3 Managers are required to provide a suitable base within the agreed boundaries, or apply to use one of the Brigades camp out facilities from which to perform standby call-out duties. Managers providing cover in a specific notional cover area who are not using a Brigade camp out area must provide an approved call-out base within that specified area.

Call out base rules:

If an officer requests to use an address as a standby/call out base that is **not** their primary address, then that address must be within the GLA boundary, within that officer's notional cover area.

(a) **Officers with a northern call sign**

If an officer has a Northern call sign then they are permitted to provide a standby/call out base from any address within the GLA boundary within the North, providing it meets contractual requirements with regards car parking (paragraph 5.4) and telephone reception (landline or a suitable mobile reception/cover). This may be their home address or another address.

If an officer has a Northern call sign but wants to provide a standby/call out base in the South then they must be able to reach one of three pre-determined points within the North within the allotted time (20 minutes for a SC and 30 minutes for a GC).

If an officer has a Northern call sign but wants to use their home address as a standby/call out base and that address is outside of the GLA boundary then they must be able to reach one of three pre-determined points within the North within the allotted time (20 minutes for a SC and 30 minutes for a GC).

(b) **Officers with a southern call sign**

If an officer has a Southern call sign then they are permitted to provide a standby/call out base from any address within the GLA boundary within the South, providing it meets contractual requirements with regards car parking (paragraph 5.4) and telephone reception (landline or a suitable mobile reception/cover). This may be their home address or another address.

If an officer has a Southern call sign but wants to use their home address as a standby/call out base in the North then they must be able to reach one of three pre-determined points within the South within the allotted time (20 minutes for a SC and 30 minutes for a GC).

If an officer has a Southern call sign but wants to provide a standby/call out base outside of the GLA boundary then they must be able to reach one of three pre-determined points within the South within the allotted time (20 minutes for a SC and 30 minutes for a GC).

(c) **Exceptions to the call out base rules are:**

- (i) Senior officers who are able to supply a standby/call out base within the Brigade area, but are required for operational reasons, to supply a standby/callout base in a different geographical area, will be permitted to use a Brigade camp out facility.
- (ii) Temporary station commanders, not on a development programme, who live outside of the Brigade area or outside of their notional operational coverage area may use Brigade premises.

4.4 Standby call-out bases must be authorised by the Establishment and Performance Team and must have adequate parking facilities for parking of a vehicle in order to respond to call-out during standby periods.

4.5 The agreed camp out bases are as follows:

- Acton
- Stratford
- Shoreditch;
- Fulham;
- Lee Green;
- Woodside.

4.6 Managers will receive confirmation from the DAC of Central Operations via e-mail when their standby call-out base is approved/not approved.

5 Arrangements for leave and other absences

Types of leave

5.1 Scale A leave:

- (a) Applications for all scale A leave (4 weeks AL) must be received before the closing date (as advised by EPT each year) in line with Policy number 486 – Annual leave and public holidays policy.
- (b) Scale A leave will take precedent over any other leave when submitted before the closing date.
- (c) If, for whatever reason, scale A leave is moved after it has been entered and confirmed, it will no longer take precedent over scale B leave and must be entered within the allocation for that leave year.

5.2 Scale B leave:

- (a) **Note:** EAL, LSL and PH leave are treated as scale B leave in this section for the purposes of booking leave.
- (b) Managers may only book scale B leave, for 24 hour duties, 6 weeks in advance, until such time as they have had all their scale A leave entered and confirmed.
- (c) Where managers have had all their scale A leave entered and confirmed, they may book scale B leave up until the remainder of the leave year in question.
- (d) Scale B leave for 9/9- and 9+ duties can be requested at any time, regardless of whether managers have entered all their scale A leave however, a 9- cannot be used following a 24 hour shift.

5.3 Other leave:

- (a) Short leave in exceptional circumstances, will be allowed during which the manager may be completely detached from duty, out of touch and beyond recall, subject to the approval of their line manager, which shall not unreasonably be withheld. Short leave can be used as a recovery process following an event/incident and should be used only in exceptional circumstances. It is normally taken in the limits of 2-3 hours and should be taken as soon as practical. This is subject to line manager/control staff approval.
- (b) Compensatory leave and rota leave are to be taken as soon as practically possible and are to be treated as scale B leave (see paragraph 6.2) in this section for the purpose of booking leave. It is therefore advisable that managers strive to recover these hours as soon as possible after the event. It is the manager's responsibility to ensure these accrued hours are recorded and clearly identifiable on their PARC. All rota leave must be booked within 12 months of it being accrued.
- (c) Officers performing additional duties as detailed in 4.4 above can either receive the payment agreed or accrue TOIL which must be taken within a 12 month period. Officer accruing additional 15 hours when converting a 9 to a 24 shift will accrue 15 hours which can be used to convert a 24 to a 9 shift or it can be used on a 9 shift in which case the extra hours will be forfeited.
- (d) If an individual chooses to accept an offer of promotion or undertake any temporary role then leave already booked will not be honoured if the absence would result in a shortfall in rota numbers.

Applying for leave

Note: Leave will not be granted over the telephone unless in exceptional circumstances (see below).

5.4 Procedure to be followed:

- (a) The applicant must discuss their leave request with their line manager, with a view to ensuring their section/team/borough has sufficient managerial cover.
- (b) E-mail the Establishment and Performance Team (central rota group mailbox) to request leave.
- (c) The line manager of the applicant must be copied in on any application.
- (d) **The rota manager will either approve or refuse all leave applications**, based on the protocols listed above and the exigencies of the Brigade.
- (e) When leave requests are granted, the rota manager will enter that leave in the rota book, and update the mobilising system. StARS application will automatically record that leave within the rota/attendance book module, negating any need to contact the manager's administration/line manager. Individuals can view the rota book at any time, but will not be permitted to book leave.
- (f) It must be noted that within the rules for StARS the only persons who are permitted to book senior managers leave are EPT and CORE Team based staff.
- (g) Officers cannot cancel leave entered for a 24 shift less than 48 hours before the commencement of that shift if an officer has already been assigned an extra duty to supplement the rota.
- (h) In the event of a manager requiring urgent leave on the day, he/she is to initially make sure that they have sufficient leave available. They are then to contact the EPT on extension 88200 or out of hours the Control Operational Resourcing and Event (CORE) Team on extension number 88111 and make that request.
- (i) Special leave applications will be applied for in the normal procedure. The line manager will confirm if the leave can be approved and follow the procedure laid out above.
- (j) Senior managers must inform the rota manager or CORE Team as a matter of urgency, whenever they are changing from their normal shift pattern, or performing additional duties, in order that any compensatory leave that is accrued can be correctly recorded within StARS.
- (k) All senior officers may carry over a maximum of 8 days of leave into January of the next year. All requests must be made through line management who upon receipt of a written request will process the leave via HR Operations.

Notification of sickness and operationally dependent activities - normal office hours 0800 hours to 1700 hours

5.5 Procedure to be followed:

- (a) It is recognised that although senior managers are responsible for notifying their line managers when reporting sick in accordance with Policy number 1005 – support health and wellbeing policy, it is more practical to provide one single point of contact. Therefore, when reporting sick senior managers must contact the EPT by telephone to inform them of the following:

- (i) Details of their sickness (together with their individual line manager's/contact person's name).
 - (ii) Daily contact updates. Daily contact is no longer required from the fourth day of sickness when an officer is covered by a sickness certificate, for the duration of that certificate. Contact must be made again, and an update provided, on the expiry of all sick certificates.
 - (iii) Booking fit for duty.
- 5.6 It is then the rota manager's responsibility to inform the line manager/contact person and update StARS and the mobilising system. Senior managers should make sure that they are aware of the identity of their nominated contact person via their line manager.
- 5.7 In the event that the rota office is unattended, the senior manager is to contact CORE Team where the procedure laid out below in paragraph 6.8 should be followed.

Notification of sickness/special leave - out of hours

- 5.8 Procedure to be followed:
- (a) Outside normal office hours senior managers must notify CORE Team the absence details, they will also provide details of their line manager/contact person. If the absence is of a confidential nature, the nature of the absence need not be disclosed at this stage.
 - (b) CORE Team will enter the absence details onto the relevant rota book in StARS. They will then inform the control commander.
 - (c) CORE Team will then pass the details to the rota manager and the line manager/contact person by the e-mail system.

Detached duty/training courses etc.

- 5.9 It is the responsibility of the individual manager to inform the rota manager giving sufficient prior notice of all issues that will affect their availability to perform operational duties. The rota manager will then make sure that minimum operational cover is maintained. If minimum cover cannot be maintained, detached duty and training requests will be **declined** and it is the responsibility of the individual to inform all relevant groups.
- 5.10 Detached duty and training requests should be avoided for 24 hour duties where possible. If a 24 hour absence cannot be avoided then the event should, where appropriate, be recorded as a partial absence.
- 5.11 Detached duty should only be used if the attendance is required outside the London area. At all other times officers should book their availability with Control. Status 7 would be the recommended action.

Second line activities

- 5.12 It is recognised that there will be occasions when senior managers will wish to book themselves status 7 (not immediately available to attend emergency calls). In these circumstances the procedure to be followed will be:
- (a) The manager is to request permission from Brigade Control and ascertain that minimum requirements are maintained. The manager must also provide the reason for requesting status 7 and the likely duration.

- (b) If the request is outside of office hours (08:00 to 17:00) and the manager making this request is on a 24 hour duty, with or without a duty role (see paragraph 2.4), it is the responsibility of that manager to arrange for the appropriate cover for the period of absence, and inform CORE Team and Brigade Control of the nominated manager's name covering their duty.
 - (c) Brigade Control will either approve or refuse the application based on the exigencies of the Brigade. Difficulties which arise will be referred to the control commander, Brigade Control who will determine the most appropriate course of action, consulting the officer of the day if appropriate.
 - (d) As soon as the status 7 activity is concluded, the manager must inform Brigade Control of their new status and location, if they remain on duty (see paragraph 8.4).
- 5.13 There may be occasions when managers need to come off the run completely if they have no car. If so the above procedure and conditions will apply. However, see section 7 below for manager's responsibilities for providing transport.

6 Status seven (category one and two responders)

- 6.1 Officers working the Flexible Duty System (FDS) are able to use status seven 'Category One' (Cat 1) and 'Category Two' (Cat 2) when performing 9-/9/9+. Flexible duty officers are only able to use the status of Cat 1 and Cat 2 following permission from their line manager for each occasion it is utilised. Under no circumstances are FDS officers to use the status Cat 1 and Cat 2 during periods of 24 hr duties.
- (a) Cat 1 responders must be available to respond to the station ground which they register with Central Rota Group (CRG) to fulfil any workplace duties within 60 minutes from time of paging. This means that when assigned to Cat 1, officers are not permitted to proceed beyond a 60-minute travel time, at normal road speed from the chosen station ground (based on the postcode of the relevant fire station).
 - (b) Cat 2 responders must be available to respond as per 6.1(a), within two hours of being paged.
- 6.2 Control must be notified when officers are utilising Cat 1 or Cat 2. Officers should notify Control of the station ground/area (as listed in 6.1(a)) they can respond to in the agreed time.
- 6.3 All journey times will be calculated using industry standard journey planner applications (e.g. **Travel Time Map**) by CRG who will provide confirmation in writing of the eligibility to the officer and their line manager.
- 6.4 The Deputy Commissioner may suspend these arrangements in exceptional circumstances where it is anticipated that application of the policy may adversely affect officer availability.
- 6.5 Any mileage claims whilst utilising Cat 1 or Cat 2 will be in line with Policy number 770 – Brigade car schemes and mileage rates.
- 6.6 FDS officers undertaking Cat 1 or 2 should adhere to the provisions of Policy number 713 – allocation and use of pool vehicles, if using a pool vehicle.
- 6.7 Any staff wishing to apply for Cat 1 or Cat 2 must make a written request, including their line manager to CRG via the rota manager.
- 6.8 Officers will not conduct cat 1 or Cat 2 arrangements when performing a 24 duty and must be within the agreed LFB boundary for the full 24 duty.

7 Brigade pool car arrangements

- 7.1 When a manager requires a pool car, for use as a Sub/Station Officer/SC(D) or to replace a lease or ECUS car that is not available, they should contact EPT on extension 88200. They will be allocated the nearest available car to them or instructed that they have to share a car with another individual. The manager will then need to make arrangements to personally collect the vehicle from the location or contact the manager they will be sharing with to make the necessary arrangements. Out of hours, contact should be via the logistics manager (LM) on extension 88111 and they will allocate a car to the manager. The LM and manager the car is allocated to, will inform EPT on the next working day to ensure the database is correct. In all instances, EPT will provide details to the manager of how the car is to be managed during its temporary allocation to the manager.
- 7.2 Managers working at the same location may need to share the 'pool cars'. However, it should be noted that managers performing a 24 hour duty must secure the use of the 'pool car' to ensure their operational availability (see Policy number 713 – allocation and use of pool vehicle - section 3.1 and 3.2).
- 7.3 Managers will be responsible for the daily and weekly inspection and maintenance of the vehicles in accordance with the driver's checklist contained in the vehicle handbook.
- 7.4 As soon as a manager becomes aware that the car they are currently using/sharing will not be available for whatever reason, they are to inform their respective line manager/Brigade Control and the EPT. The individual is then to seek a replacement via the EPT. The EPT operative will only identify the location of the vehicle according to the database; the allocated vehicle must then be collected by the individual. This vehicle must then be returned to the same location after completions of the duty. EPT staff are not responsible for arranging delivery or collection.
- 7.5 As soon as a manager has finished using a temporary allocated pool car, they should follow Policy number 713 – allocation and use of pool vehicles - section 5.4. The car should be clean inside and out, charged and fuelled up prior to the manager informing EPT of the availability of it. Any defects should be correctly reported to Babcock Control Centre on #6 400.
- 7.6 From 17 February 2003 the Transport for London Congestion Charging Zone came into effect. It was agreed within the partnership scheme that Fire Brigade senior managers will be exempt only when they are on duty. It is therefore crucial that managers inform the rota manager whenever they are changing duties from their normal shift pattern as StARS rota books will be the determining factor in judging when a manager is on duty and if a penalty charge is created. Please see policy number 713 - allocation and use of pool vehicles for guidance on full adherence to the correct use, maintenance and data recording of pool cars.

Note: Separate guidance has been issued in Policy number 484 - Congestion charging policy on the administration of this scheme.

8 Mobilising arrangements

- 8.1 Managers will be notified of operational incidents in accordance with Policy number 412 – Mobilising policy. In response to an incident, Brigade Control will mobilise the nearest manager with the relevant qualification.
- 8.2 It is not necessary to book on duty with Brigade Control at the beginning of the day, as the mobilising system will automatically show managers available for mobilising at their primary place of duty from 0800 hours. Therefore officers performing negative hours are required to update their status to their call out location. However, if a manager is on 24 hour duty and proceeding

to/from their standby call-out base, it is crucial they update their location/status where necessary. Managers do not need to book off duty, except in the following circumstances:

- (a) When it is prior to their normal finish time, and if they have been status 7 up to their finish time.
 - (b) When they are detained at an operational incident after their normal finish time.
- 8.3 During standby time (see paragraph 2.3) managers will normally provide cover from their agreed call out base. However, there may be occasions when they may be required to perform these duties from a different location. In these cases it will be the control commander and CORE Team who will direct these moves either prior to or during the shift to ensure the operational efficiency of the Brigade at that time.
- 8.4 To ensure that the correct manager is ordered to an incident it is imperative that managers inform Brigade Control of all changes to their status and location (see paragraph 8.2). All status updates are to clearly state the location number and name e.g. F21S Stratford. The control officer will repeat the message for confirmation.
- 8.5 On arrival at an incident, managers are to make sure they book status 3 with Brigade Control via the main scheme radio (parent channel of the incident). When leaving an incident the manager is required to inform Brigade Control of their updated status.
- 8.6 When managers have been alerted by Brigade Control to remotely monitor an incident, it is that senior manager's responsibility to monitor the incident using their own radio equipment. Senior managers should not place the onus on Brigade Control officers to continually inform them of progress via the telephone system. It is also the senior manager's responsibility to inform Brigade Control if they are unable to continue this function for any reason, such as the end of a shift or mobilised to a separate incident. Brigade Control will then select another manager to maintain the monitoring role.

9 Contact numbers

Rota management

Location	Contact person	Extension
Rota Group Office Brigade Control	EPT Team	88200
	Changes to status and location	50207
	Response to operational paging	50208
	Officer of the watch	50209/50210
	Control commander	50209/50210
CORE Team Brigade Control	Co-ordinators	RML 88111
		SBM 88126

Document history

Assessments

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

EIA	09/01/24	SDIA	L - 25/10/23	HSWIA	25/10/23	RA	NA
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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
	Mainly contact details and rank to role changes, although there have been amendments to the rota management and arrangements for leave sections. It is recommended that you read through the updated policy to familiarise yourself with all the changes.	20/03/2009
Throughout	Control commander replaced by operations manager and control officer replaced by control room officer due to a change in the names of the roles	04/06/2010
Throughout	Removed AOD/DU/GS role. Added to Operational cover paragraph 2.9 to include buffers on rotas.	04/03/2011
Throughout	Change of roles from manager to SM/GM, additions made to managerial roles in paragraph 2.4 and 2.5. References to Ops policy, health and safety and service delivery departments have been replaced in line with the Top Management Review of October 2010. Recommended that you read through the updated policy to familiarise yourself with all the changes.	01/06/2011
Throughout	Change of reference from RMC to EPT.	17/05/2012
Page 2, para 1.2	Updated location of RMC from Stratford to LOC Merton.	11/08/2014
Page 11	Subject list and FOIA exemptions tables updated.	16/12/2014
Throughout	Policy reviewed as current. Changes made throughout please read policy to familiarise yourself with its content.	01/07/2015
Page 14	SDIA date added.	03/07/2015
Page 6, para 4.4	Minor amendment to wording of paragraph 4.4 (g)	22/07/2015
Page 1	Amendments to PN Owner and Responsible work team due to TMR.	09/10/2015
Throughout	Reference to PN712 – attendance management policy updated to PN889 – managing attendance policy.	21/02/2017
Throughout	Additional specialist tags added/ Amendments to specialist tag minimum requirements, Leave amendments added Reference to policy number 713 made in section 7.	19/04/2018
Throughout	Reference to Policy number 713 – allocation and use of pool vehicles and charging of vehicles added.	06/08/2018

Page/para nos.	Brief description of change	Date
Page 7, para 4.4	Minor amendment to wording of paragraph 4.4 (f), incorporating recall exchange.	14/01/2019
Throughout	Role to rank changes made to content. Change to OD1 being exclusive.	15/10/2019
Throughout	Interagency liaison officer replaced with national interagency liaison officer.	17/01/2020
Page 4, para 2.5 (k)	SRT officer numbers amended.	17/01/2020
Para 6.4	Addition of point 6.4 (g) and renumbering thereafter.	05/10/2020
Throughout	Updated SRT and MCR numbers.	29/07/2021
Page 12	New section 6 added for Status seven (category one and two responders).	15/11/2021
Throughout	References to PN889 – managing attendance policy replaced with PN1005 – supporting health and wellbeing policy.	28/03/2023
Pages 4 and 5	Paragraph 1.7 (n) new content added. Paragraph 1.8 (n) - Wild Fire Support Officer (WSO) content added to support understanding the requirements and responsibilities of the Officer	11/09/2023
Para 1.8 (e)	GT Officer number changed.	20/11/2023
Para 5.4 (k)	Maximum carry over of leave increased from 5 days to 8 days.	20/11/2024
Throughout	All reference to MCR removed.	13/01/2025
Throughout	References to the Resource Management Centre and RMC replaced with Control Operational Resourcing and Event (CORE) Team. References to the Resource Management Centre (RMC) and RMC replaced with Control Operational Resourcing and Event (CORE) Team and CORE.	14/07/2025

Subject list

You can find this policy under the following subjects.

Mobilising	Operational roles
Planning	

Freedom of Information Act exemptions

This policy/procedure has been securely marked due to:

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

Covering absences of uniformed officers policy

New policy number: **439**
 Old instruction number: **PER:E020:a1**
 Issue date: **20 June 2006**
 Reviewed as current: **21 August 2026**
 Owner: **Head of HR Operations and Systems, People Services**
 Responsible work team: **Policy, Pay and Reward**

Contents

1	Introduction	2
2	Definitions	2
3	Covering absence of officers at operational stations	2
4	Covering absence of station commander to deputy assistant commissioner	3
5	Selection procedure for temporary station commander, group commander and deputy assistant commissioner positions	4
6	Temporary promotion to leading firefighter/sub officer/station officer specialist posts	4
7	Pay and conditions for temporary promotion	4
8	Procedure for recording and authorisation of payments	4
9	Records	5
10	Help and support	5
	Document history	6

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy sets out the Brigade's arrangements of cover during periods of absence of uniformed officers.
- 1.2 This policy should be applied in line with the Brigade's [values](#):
 - Service – We put the public first.
 - Courage – We step up to the challenge.
 - Learning – We listen so that we can improve.
 - Teamwork – We work together and include everyone.
 - Equity – We treat everyone fairly according to their needs.
 - Integrity – We act with honesty.

2 Definitions

- **Competent:** - Is where you have successfully completed all elements of the development programme for a particular rank and been confirmed competent in that rank.
- **Development:** - Is where you are placed on a development programme, following success at the appropriate assessment centre, that may result you being confirmed as competent upon successful completion of the programme.
- **Acting Up and Temporary promotion** – Is where you undertake the duties of a higher rank. Acting up covers periods of 1-21 days, temporary promotion covers periods of 22 days or more. In all cases the temporary promotion/acting up will be a maximum of one rank. For StARS admin purposes when an individual is performing acting up or temporary promotion, they will be shown in both roles separated by '/', and as on development in the higher role. Temporary promotion/acting up will be paid at the competent rate of pay in the higher rank for individuals acting up/temporarily promoted to leading firefighter/sub officer/station officer.
- **Suitably assessed** – Is where you are competent and have been assessed through an approved process as suitable to undertake temporary promotion to the next rank.

3 Covering absence of officers at operational stations

Covering at operational stations – firefighter/leading firefighter

- 3.1 Competent firefighters who have been suitably assessed will have the opportunity to act up either (a) at their own station only, or (b) also at other stations, to cover the absence of a leading firefighter.
- 3.2 Under normal circumstances it will not be necessary for a firefighter to act up to leading firefighter in place of a leading firefighter who is acting up to sub officer. At one appliance stations the Brigade will seek to maintain the position of two officers on a watch. This will be achieved by the acting up of a firefighter from within the watch, or by sending in a standby leading firefighter or temporary leading firefighter. Where this is not possible the appliance will remain on the run with one officer.

Covering at operational stations – leading firefighter/sub officer/station officer

- 3.3 At single appliance stations a suitably assessed competent leading firefighter will act up in the absence of their sub officer, for a minimum of 21 duty shifts in a rolling 12 month period.
- 3.4 At multi appliance stations a suitably assessed competent leading firefighter will act up, only when **both** the station officer and the sub officer are absent, for a minimum of 21 duty shifts in a rolling 12 month period. Where there is more than one suitably assessed competent leading firefighter available the station commander should ensure a fair system is established to identify which leading firefighter will act up.
- 3.5 A competent sub officer will be required to act up to station officer to cover any shortfall either at their own station or any other station.

Temporary promotion at operational stations

- 3.6 Temporary promotion will be used, where possible, to cover absences which result from:
 - Unfilled posts.
 - Sickness certified by a doctor for a period in excess of 21 consecutive days.
 - Attendance at training courses or detached duty for periods in excess of 21 consecutive days.
- 3.7 A sub officer can be required to undertake temporary promotion and may volunteer to undertake temporary promotion providing they are suitably assessed as competent.
- 3.8 EPT will maintain a register of staff who have expressed an interest in undertaking temporary promotion.

Appliance availability

- 3.9 Where the absence of an officer would result in an appliance or station being taken off the run or where brigade wide operational officer cover is compromised, the use of acting up, temporary promotion, pre-arranged overtime¹, standbys or redeployments will be considered to cover this need. See the joint [Agreement in relation to redeployment of appliances \(2018\)](#). Decisions regarding appliance availability and officer cover are made by the officer of the day/Control Operational Resourcing and Event (CORE) team.
- 3.10 Whilst the leading firefighter on development or temporary leading firefighter is awaiting the arrival of a standby officer they will have managerial responsibility for the station, the custody of the keys and ride in charge of the pump ladder until the arrival of the standby officer.

4 Covering absence of station commander to deputy assistant commissioner

- 4.1 Short-term absences of station commanders, group commanders and deputy assistant commissioners, may be covered by additional duties. Short/long-term absences of group commanders and deputy assistant commissioners may be covered by the role below undertaking operational cover only in the higher role. Long-term absences of station commanders, group commanders and deputy assistant commissioners may be covered by temporary promotion.
- 4.2 Temporary promotion to cover posts of station commander to deputy assistant commissioner will take place for the reasons specified in paragraph 3.6 above when the absence continues or

¹ In accordance with the Pre-arranged (determined) overtime policy, [policy number 375](#).

vacancy remains unfilled for a period of over 21 days, notwithstanding paragraph 5.3 below. Temporary promotion to station and group commander are subject to assistant commissioner/head of service approval. For temporary promotion to deputy assistant commissioner the authorisation will be given by the Deputy Commissioner and Director of Operations.

- 4.3 Special circumstances - Temporary promotion for periods shorter than that indicated in 4.2 above may be approved in exceptional cases. This is where failure to temporarily fill a post immediately will result in a particular shortage of officer cover, leading to a decline in the effectiveness of the service. This could also be where specified work deadlines, inspections and targets, etc., will not be achieved and the consequences of this non achievement will be serious. Approval must be given by an assistant commissioner/head of service or above in such cases.

5 Selection procedure for temporary station commander, group commander and deputy assistant commissioner positions

- 5.1 Personnel will be selected subject to their position in the current assessment process for the post in which the temporary position is available.
- 5.2 Where appropriate an assistant commissioner /head of service or above will take into account skills matching of individuals to positions.
- 5.3 Assistant commissioners/head of service or above may decide not to cover absences with temporary promotion, where they consider service delivery will not be impaired.

6 Temporary promotion to leading firefighter/sub officer/station officer specialist posts

- 6.1 Temporary promotion to leading firefighter/sub officer/station officer specialist posts may take place in circumstances set out at paragraph 3.6 above.

7 Pay and conditions for temporary promotion

- 7.1 Staff undertaking temporary promotion shall be entitled to the leave entitlement applicable to the rank performed pro-rata.
- 7.2 For all members of staff who have been temporarily promoted for a continuous period of less than 12 months, all payments and benefits associated with the performance of temporary promotion shall cease to be applicable during periods of sickness absence.
- 7.3 Staff who are temporarily promoted will continue to receive the applicable rate of pay for their rank during absence due to authorised leave (e.g. annual, special, maternity, maternity support and adoption) and leave for training courses.
- 7.4 Staff who have been temporarily promoted for a continuous period of 12 months or more will retain that temporary rank and will continue to receive the higher rate of pay for that rank if they are on short term sickness absence, i.e. 27 days or less.
- 7.5 Temporary promotion may be reviewed at any time.

8 Procedure for recording and authorisation of payments

- 8.1 All acting up/temporary promotion of uniformed staff must be recorded on StARS and will be automatically collected by Payroll Services via StARS once authorised by the station commander

or Head of Section as appropriate. The monthly deadline for entry and authorisation is the 4th of each month, entries and authorisation after that will be paid in the following month.

- 8.2 Payments for acting up/temporary promotion for watch based staff will be calculated on a shift worked basis, i.e. for each shift worked on acting up/temporary promotion the additional payment will be the annual difference between the higher and substantive rates of pay divided by the number of normal working shifts in a year (182.5).

9 Records

- 9.1 Records will be kept on your electronic personal record file (e-PRF) and retained in accordance with [Policy number 788](#) - Electronic personal record files (e-PRF). Personal data shall be processed in accordance with [Policy number 351](#) – Data protection and privacy policy.

10 Help and support

- 10.1 Please contact the Establishment and Performance Team by email to <mailto:EstablishmentandPerformanceTeam@london-fire.gov.uk>.
- 10.2 This policy may also be available on request in other alternative accessible formats as set out in [Policy number 290](#) – Guidance note on translation and interpretation. Please contact Communications on extension 30753 and by email to communications.team@london-fire.gov.uk to discuss your needs and options.

Document history

Assessments

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

EIA	29/04/24	SDIA	L – 23/09/25	HSWIA	10/11/25	RA	N/A
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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
Page 5, para 9.1 Page 5, para 10.2	Data protection details added. Access to alternative policy format details added.	10/04/2024
Page 6	Equality impact assessment date updated.	30/04/2024
Page 5, para 9.1	Establishment and Performance Team details added.	28/05/2024
Pag3, para 3.9	Reference to RMC changed to CORE team.	24/07/2025
Page 6	Health, Safety and Welfare impact assessment date updated.	11/11/2025
Page 1 Page 2, para 2	Owner details updated. Reference to StARS display updated to include acting up.	21/08/2026

Subject list

You can find this policy under the following subjects.

Absence	Acting up
Deputising	Duties

Freedom of Information Act exemptions

This policy/procedure has been securely marked due to:

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