

Freedom of Information request: Reference number FOI2025/00243

Date of request: 13th March 2025

Request:

How many call outs has LFB had in the last 5 years to deal with fires on tube station platforms or booking halls due to fires caused by books in community libraries?

Response:

The London Fire Brigade (LFB) Data Team has conducted a review of fire incidents in or near London Underground station platforms between January 2019 – December 2024. There are not any recorded incidents of fires being caused by books in community libraries.

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/>