LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

Fitness policy for uniformed operational staff

New policy number:	**935**
Old instruction number:	
Issue date:	**18 September 2018**
Reviewed as current:	**15 September 2023**
Owner:	**Assistant Director, Health and Safety**
Responsible work team:	**Wellbeing, Health and Fitness**

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1 Introduction

1.1 This policy sets out the Brigade's arrangements for operational staff to maintain their fitness so they are able to perform their roles safely, effectively and to help in minimising the risk of potential injury and illness. This policy applies to all operational employees.

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 Commitment and responsibility

2.1 It is your responsibility to:

- Maintain a state of physical fitness for operational duties that includes an appropriate and acceptable body weight, aerobic fitness, strength and muscular endurance levels;
- take a reasonable approach towards the prevention of being overweight and obesity and to ensure that the delivery of a safe system of service to the public is not affected. While the Brigade is prepared to support and assist overweight and obese employees, it cannot find itself in a situation where operational staff are restricted from their role due to excess weight and obesity or their cardio vascular risk factors are at an unacceptable level;
- familiarise yourself with the general advice provided for in this policy.
- accept advice offered by the Fitness Adviser (FA) and/or the Occupational Health Service (OHS);
- comply with any advice that may be recommended in line with this policy;
- attend review consultations as required; and
- comply with any return to work or rehabilitation strategy following a period of non operational duties.

Occupational Health Service and/or fitness adviser to:

- Promote healthy lifestyles to you and give advice during routine consultations;
- initiate early intervention and advice in cases of weight increase and/or reduction in aerobic capacity/cardio vascular levels including agreeing set improvement targets ;
- provide specialist advice, support and monitoring with input from your general practitioner where appropriate;
- advise management on your fitness for operational duty; and
- monitor any return to work or rehabilitation programme.

Line manager to:

- Familiarise staff with the general advice provided for in this policy;
- encourage and instil staff compliance with the Brigade's fitness policy;
- assist in ensuring that staff attend for health screening, fitness reviews and health consultations;
- assist in supervising any recommended return to work or rehabilitation programmes following any staff restriction to non-operational duties;
- continually monitor the fitness performance of staff;

- raise any concerns regarding the operational fitness of staff with the FAs or the OHS, as appropriate (depending on what is being presented), using the referral process;
- seek immediate advice from the FA, OHS or People Services if there are any concerns over an staff's capability to perform operational duties safely; and
- arrange activities and keep up to date records e.g., Station Diary, PDP's.

3 Fitness in context

3.1 It is important to clarify the distinction between medical and occupational fitness, encompassing cardio vascular fitness. A person, whilst assessed as being medically fit, may not be occupationally fit to perform the necessary tasks related to their role.

3.2 Medical fitness is assessed by the OHS, who will review your medical fitness to undertake your role. The Routine Periodic Medical (RPM) programme requires a three yearly assessment for all operational staff which will include hearing, vision, lung function tests, blood pressure, cholesterol, urine, drug and breath alcohol screening tests, along with the general body parameter measurements and urine dipstick test. The RPM will also include the Chester Step Test which will contribute and provide for an indicative assessment of an individual's overall medical health. These tests are aimed at screening for health issues that will provide for useful health education, health promotion and will effectively be a signpost to General Practitioner (GP) intervention and medical management should the need arise.

3.3 The Brigade will provide the necessary support mechanisms for you to reach and maintain occupational fitness levels, be that via managers, FA and/or the OHS. The ultimate responsibility with regard to occupational fitness and its maintenance lies with you in ensuring that occupational fitness levels are maintained so as not to compromise the discharging of duties commensurate with the firefighting role.

3.4 Regular physical fitness programmes will be undertaken by firefighters at fire stations, recorded as part of regular routine on Station Diary.

3.5 The OHS will work with the FA and other specialists as appropriate, to help identify the required physical fitness regime that will address any identified health condition(s) in question with a view to helping you to improved physical and occupational fitness by way of putting in place an Action Plan that will aim to achieve this.

4 Fitness requirement upon entry to service

4.1 The Brigade uses the physical fitness test component of the Department for Communities Local Government (CLG) National Firefighter Selection Tests (NFST) as part of its firefighter selection process.

5 Maintaining occupational fitness – all operational staff

5.1 Ensuring the fitness of station based operational staff is an important feature of supporting the Brigade's operational capacity.

5.2 Sub/Stn Officers should plan and allocate time within their training plans for regular physical activities that address the identified requirements of their watch. Fitness routines and plans should be built into pre existing station routines and carried out as part of the overall routines for at least two X one and a quarter hour sessions within each tour of duty for shift duty personnel and two X one and a quarter hour sessions per week for day duty staff. Individual's performance against these activities will be continually assessed and appraised using Station Diary. The recorded outcomes will be monitored on an ongoing basis in order to measure the impact of this

initiative on firefighting staff and to also assess the overall effect from the corporate perspective in so far as it affects all operational staff.

6 Regular fitness assessments

6.1 Managers are required, as part of their management role, to monitor and assess the occupational fitness of their staff on an on-going basis in order to discharge their duties and responsibilities from an occupational fitness perspective. This will be done through the continued assessment of a person's performance on a day to day basis, including that on the incident ground, and once designed and agreed with the representative bodies, by regular occupational fitness assessment.

7 Flexible duty system (FDS) managers and non station based staff

7.1 The expectation is that officers on the FDS and operational staff who are not attached to fire stations will maintain fitness levels commensurate with their role. They will accordingly, be subjected to the three yearly RPM which will provide indicators as to both medical and occupational fitness and appropriate interventions when necessary.

7.2 Managers should consider the fitness and wellbeing of their staff in line with this policy and existing performance management protocols utilising the FA and OHS where concerns arise.

8 Records

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

9 Help and support

9.1 Please contact the HR Helpdesk on extension 89100 option 3 and by email to IT.HR@london-fire.gov.uk.

9.2 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	30/04/24	SDIA	L - 10/08/23	HSWIA	11/08/23	RA	NA

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 3, para 2 and Page 4, para 5.2	References to 'Individual Training Record (ITR)' removed.	12/10/2018
Page 4, para 5.2	Role to rank changes made.	26/08/2020
Page 5	SDIA and HSWIA updated.	17/08/2023
Throughout Page 3, para 3.3 and page 4, para 6.2	References to Wellworks removed. Reference to future reviews removed.	15/09/2023
Page 2, para 1 Page 3, para 8-9	Introduction consolidated. Records and Help and support details added.	30/10/2023
Page 2, para 1.2	Values included.	02/04/2024
Page 4, para 8.1 Page 4, para 9.2	Data protection details added. Access to alternative policy format details added.	19/04/2024
Page 5	Equality impact assessment date updated.	30/04/2024

Subject list

You can find this policy under the following subjects.

Fitness	Exercise
Occupational fitness	Targets

Freedom of Information Act exemptions

This policy/procedure has been securely marked due to:

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