LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

Freedom of Information request: Reference number FOI2026/01387

Date of request: 28th October

Request:

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, please provide the following information held by the London Fire Commissioner / London Fire Brigade about the Professional Standards Unit (PSU).

1. The PSU's terms of reference, remit or equivalent document setting out its responsibilities.

2. The PSU's current structure chart, by role and grade (no names of junior staff are needed).

3. The training and qualification standards required of PSU investigators.

4. Any target or standard timescales for completing PSU investigations and for notifying the person under investigation, and the PSU's reported performance against them for each of the last three financial years.

5. Any procedure for how the PSU reviews or keeps under review the suspension of a member of staff.

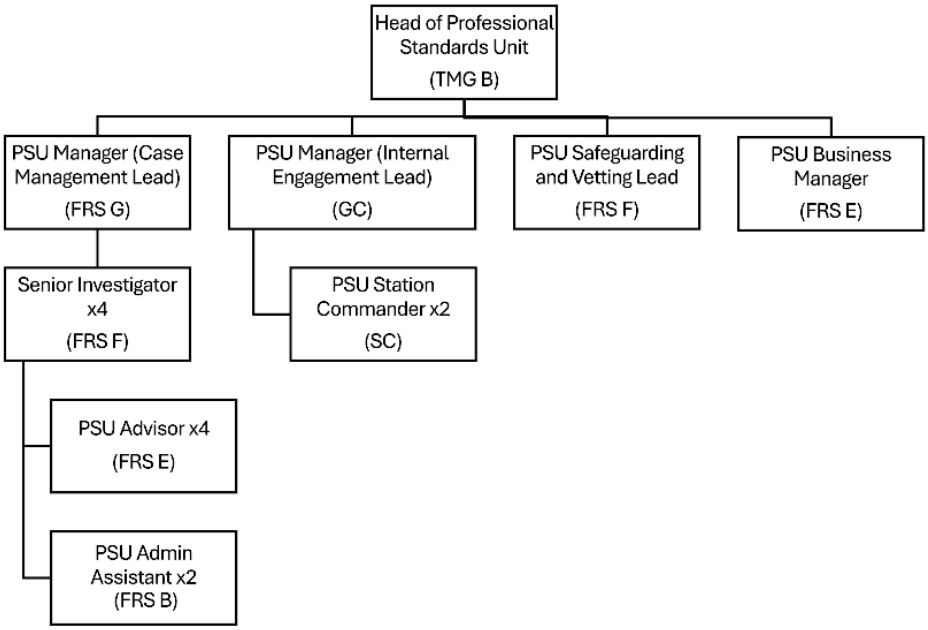
Please send the information by email. If any part of the request is unclear, please contact me so I can refine it (section 16). If you withhold any information, please say which exemption you rely on and why. Please acknowledge receipt and reply within 20 working days.

Response:

1. The PSU's terms of reference, remit or equivalent document setting out its responsibilities.

> The Professional Standard's Unit doesn't have a term of reference; however the PSU's responsibilities are set out within the below statement which is shared with staff.
>
> The Professional Standards Unit (PSU) supports the London Fire Brigade to uphold its values and maintain a workplace where people are treated with respect and can feel safe at work.
>
> The PSU provides oversight, advice, and assurance to support concerns being handled fairly, consistently and in line with the relevant policy. We provide advice and guidance on conduct and grievance matters. In relation to conduct concerns, the PSU assesses concerns and determines the appropriate route in accordance with the Discipline (Conduct) Policy PN392. For grievance matters, the PSU provides advice and support where appropriate, with a specific advice and oversight role in relation to dignity-at-work concerns in accordance with the Grievance (Complaints) Policy PN 394.

2. The PSU's current structure chart, by role and grade (no names of junior staff are needed).



3. The training and qualification standards required of PSU investigators.

The London Fire Brigade has considered your request. Information describing the training and qualification requirements for a role would not normally constitute personal data, as it relates to organisational standards rather than identifiable individuals.

However, the Brigade does not hold a prescribed set of formal training or qualification standards specifically for PSU investigators in the form requested. Investigators receive training commensurate with their role and responsibilities, and competency requirements may be determined through internal policies, procedures, and operational needs.

To the extent that your request seeks details of the qualifications, training records, accreditation status, or professional development of individual investigators, this information would constitute personal data. Such information is exempt from disclosure under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, as disclosure would contravene the data protection principles set out in the UK General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018.

4. Any target or standard timescales for completing PSU investigations and for notifying the person under investigation, and the PSU's reported performance against them for each of the last three financial years.

The target for completing an investigation is 20 weeks. This timeline starts at the point an employee is notified they are under investigation until the point they are notified of the outcome of the investigation.

This KPI was introduced in April 2026, therefore we can only provide this informal for Q1 and Q2 2026.

For Q1 2026, the average investigation length was 23 weeks. For Q2 2026, the average investigation length was 17 weeks.

There is no set timescale for notifying an employee they are under investigation. However, the timescales within our relevant policies do apply.

5. Any procedure for how the PSU reviews or keeps under review the suspension of a member of staff.

The management of suspension is set out within the Discipline (Conduct) Policy, PN392.

7.5 **Suspension**

- Suspension is a neutral act and is not a disciplinary sanction.
- Suspension may be considered where necessary and should only be used as a last resort where no reasonable alternatives are available, such as temporary redeployment, alternative duties or placement on another watch or team. All alternatives must be explored and recorded before a suspension is authorised.
- Suspension must be informed by a completed Suspension Risk Assessment, in consultation with the Professional Standards Unit, and authorised at the appropriate level.
- The employee will be informed of the decision to suspend, the reasons for suspension, any conditions that apply, and the arrangements for review.
- Managers must recognise the potential impact on wellbeing and handle decisions and communication sensitively. Appropriate support should be offered.
- Where the employee is a recognised trade union representative, the LFB will, with the employee's agreement, inform the relevant senior full-time official before any suspension is put in place. As set out in 9.1.
- Employees will normally remain on full pay during suspension. Where an employee is absent due to sickness during a period of suspension, normal sick pay provisions will apply.
- Suspension should be kept as short as possible and reviewed regularly to ensure it remains necessary and proportionate.

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/