



LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

Decision title

## Evacuation and Rescue Policy

Recommendation by

Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance

Decision Number

LFC-0391-D

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### Summary

Report LFC-0391y introduces the 'Evacuation and Rescue' policy. This is a new operational policy which has been developed in response to learning identified through the Brigade's Grenfell Tower safety and learning review process. It also addresses a recommendation and particular issues relating to evacuation and rescue arising from Phase 1 of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry (GTI).

Report LFC-0391y describes:

- the background and rationale for developing this new policy
- a summary of the key elements that form part of this policy
- the consultations undertaken; and
- the training and other outstanding dependencies that now need to be progressed before this new operational guidance is implemented

### Decision

The London Fire Commissioner approves the new 'Evacuation and Rescue' policy, provided as Report LFC-0391y Appendix 1, noting that the effective date for implementation is subject to training and that the policy is likely to be subject to further amendment.

**Andy Roe**

London Fire Commissioner

Date **This decision was remotely signed on Friday 09 October 2020**

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LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

Report title

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## Evacuation and Rescue Policy

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Report to	Date
Commissioner's Board	29 July 2020
Deputy Mayor's Fire and Resilience Board	18 August 2020
London Fire Commissioner	

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Report by	Report number
Assistant Commissioner, Operational Policy and Assurance	LFC-0391y

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### Summary

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This report describes:

- the background and rationale for developing this new policy
- a summary of the key elements that form part of this policy
- the consultations undertaken; and
- the training and other outstanding dependencies that now need to be progressed before this new operational guidance is implemented

### Recommended decision

The London Fire Commissioner approves the new 'Evacuation and Rescue' policy, provided as Appendix 1, noting that the effective date for implementation is subject to training and that the policy is likely to be subject to further amendment.

### Background and rationale for developing a new evacuation and rescue policy

1. GTI's Phase 1 report identifies evacuation as a key area for improvement and specifically recommends "that fire and rescue services develop policies for partial and total evacuation of high rise residential buildings and training to support them" (see paragraph 33.22 (b) of 'GTI Phase 1 Report Overview' dated October 2019).
2. The implementation of this new policy and the associated training solution will enable LFB to discharge that recommendation, but the scope of this policy extends beyond high rise residential buildings and provides guidance that is applicable to fires in all building types where large scale evacuation and/or mass rescue might be required.

3. The policy also sets out principles that can be applied at incident types other than fire, although it was recognised early during the development phase that it would not be practicable to devise a generic evacuation and rescue policy that would comprehensively cover all the challenges that can arise during the broad range of incidents where large-scale evacuation and/or mass rescue could be required.
4. Operational Policy and Assurance (OPA) has already reviewed and made changes to a number of operational policies, including Policy Notes (PN) 633 - High Rise Firefighting and PN 790 - Fire Survival Guidance (FSG).
5. The Grenfell Tower fire demonstrated the very high levels of risk which can be created for members of the public and emergency responders when a building does not behave as fire safety requirements intend and the resulting fire exceeds 'normal' expectations. This incident also highlighted that the current lack of guidance in relation to the considerations and actions that need to be assessed by firefighters when evacuating or rescuing large numbers of people constitutes a gap in LFB's current suite of operational policies.
6. Any incident that requires an Incident Commander (IC) to depart from the 'responsible person's' planned evacuation strategy, which will have been devised as part of their fire risk assessment for the premises, is likely to be fast-paced and present a variety of challenges. Such incidents will require the IC to gather and process a large volume of information – some of which may be incomplete or contradictory - and then make a series of finely balanced decisions. The decision to advise large numbers of people to evacuate or to initiate a mass rescue itself requires the IC to strike the right balance between a potentially broad range of risks and benefits. This can then be swiftly followed by a need to make a sequence of potentially complex and emotionally charged decisions in order to ensure that the assistance of firefighters is directed towards those who are at the greatest and most imminent risk.
7. The new policy seeks to address these challenges by ensuring that all those personnel who are liable to attend incidents which may involve the evacuation and/or rescue of large number of people will have a secure understanding of concepts that underpin these activities. The key new terms - 'emergency evacuation' and 'mass rescue' - formed part of PNs 633 and 790 and were first introduced to personnel in Operational News 37, which was published in August 2019.
8. A variety of information sources were used to inform the development of this policy, including the evacuation-related guidance provided by the National Operational Guidance (NOG) programme and the London Resilience Partnership's 'Mass Evacuation Framework'. Extensive use was also made of the expertise available within LFB, such as;
  - a. Regulatory Fire Safety – advised on definitions and information relating to planned evacuation strategies
  - b. Central service delivery – provided information relating to operational information gathering and to ensure alignment between this policy and PN 800 – Management of operational risk information
9. General Counsel and the Grenfell Tower Investigation and Review Team – advice to ensure the GTI's findings were addressed and regarding key issues, such as how best to describe the factors an IC should consider when setting priorities during an emergency evacuation and/or mass rescue.

## **Key elements of the evacuation and rescue policy**

10. The new policy describes the reasonably foreseeable hazards and includes a definition of all the relevant key terms and strategies that are associated with evacuation and rescue. The identification of hazards which are likely to be encountered during evacuation and rescue will assist firefighters to understand what activities and issues may pose risks for building occupants and emergency responders. Equally, the definition of key terms will help to ensure more accurate communication and enable improved information recording and sharing, both before and during an incident.
11. The new policy also describes the various planned evacuation strategies that firefighters may encounter when they are responding to operational incidents and/or when undertaking familiarisation visits of premises.
12. The inclusion of a planning section in this policy supplements the work recently undertaken by central operations to revise PN 800 – Management of operational risk information. This is achieved by providing guidance relating specifically to what evacuation and rescue related information should be gathered and recorded in advance of an incident, during activities such as 7 (2) d familiarisation visits or fire safety inspections.
13. To support operations and decision-making during an incident, the policy describes what should be considered and the actions that can be taken in order to ensure the safe and effective evacuation and/or rescue of large numbers of people. This information is presented in chronological order, starting with what should be considered and done as soon as practicable after arriving at an incident and moving into the more complex factors and actions that are likely to arise and require consideration as an incident escalates.
14. It is not possible to exhaustively predict how every incident that may require evacuation or rescue will develop, so the planning section of the policy is not prescriptive. Rather, the focus is on providing a framework within which appropriate information can be gathered and options for consideration and action, relevant to the prevailing situation, can be determined.
15. The policy makes it clear that a premature or inappropriate decision to initiate emergency evacuation can itself cause harm and provides the IC with a list of the signs and symptoms which, either singularly or in combination, should be actively assessed in order to determine whether an emergency evacuation and/or mass rescue is necessary. Guidance is also provided to enable the IC to put the corporate principle that those persons whose reported location means they face the greatest risk into practical effect, as well as providing a list of possible issues and actions that an IC should actively assess as they develop their overall plan for an incident.
16. The policy explains how to establish and maintain effective situational awareness, indicating the information sources to be considered and by reminding the IC that they should identify and resolve any inconsistencies in the information they receive. Emphasis is also placed on the importance of keeping all those affected by the incident – responders, occupants and the wider public – informed of developments and of the need to consider the welfare and humanitarian needs of those who have been evacuated and/or rescued.
17. Although the policy is primarily concerned with fires in the built environment the evacuation and rescue principles can be applied to other incident types where planned evacuation strategies exist, or emergency evacuation, rescue and/or mass rescue is required.

## **Consultation**

18. This policy has been subject to an extensive consultation process in order to ensure that it reflects the views, knowledge and understanding of all stakeholders.
19. Ahead of the standard consultation process that is applied to all operational policies, various drafts of the evacuation and rescue policy were shared at an early stage of development with a range of individuals and LFB departments. This promoted high levels of engagement from the outset and also enabled key concepts and issues (some of which are outlined above, in paragraph 8) to be identified and developed on the basis of expert input.
20. The policy has been subject to formal consultation with Heads of Service and the Brigade's external Counsel, providing valuable scrutiny and a high degree of assurance that this policy is accurate and covers all the issues identified through GTI. This has included ensuring that the definitions are as clear as possible and consistent through PN 633 and PN 790. This consultation also identified the challenge with using the same terminology for different meanings i.e. 'Emergency Evacuation'. This then informed national consultation through the National Operational Learning (NOL), Fires in tall buildings forum. This policy has also influenced the national position on the current terminology in relation to firefighter emergency, where emergency evacuation is nationally recognised to remove firefighters from a fire immediately. The Brigade's proposal to change the use of the term 'Emergency Evacuation' was raised with the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Incident Command project board and was presented to the Strategic Engagement Forum and Operations Committee where it was agreed that the term will be replaced with 'Emergency Responder Evacuation', this then allows FRS's to use the terminology 'Emergency Evacuation', to indicate they are carrying out an emergency evacuation of members of the public from a premises but this does not include the emergency evacuation of first responders.
21. The draft policy was submitted for consultation with representative bodies at Brigade Joint Committee for Health, Safety and Welfare (BJCHSW) on 16 April 2020. The FBU reported back and commented on the draft policy at BJCHSW meeting on the 18 June 2020, further consultation is ongoing with a view to reaching agreed outcomes in September 2020.
22. The rescue or emergency evacuation of those with limited mobility or other vulnerabilities is an important consideration for ICs, which requires a thorough risk assessment. This is currently subject to further work which may require amendment to the policy in due course. The Commissioner is therefore asked to approve this policy, noting that it is likely to be subject to further amendment before it is implemented. Any such amendments will be presented to the Commissioner before the date of implementation.

## **Training and next steps**

23. Before this policy goes live operationally suitable and sufficient training will be required for all personnel including Control Room Operators (CRO) who are liable to be involved in its implementation at operational incidents. It should also be considered whether Regulatory Fire safety Inspecting Officers need to receive this training to assist in informing fire safety inspections in relation to evacuation strategies.
24. The training solution has been finalised and it is proposed that there will be a three-phase training package with the first stage being a Computer based training with additional face to face training. The policy will not go live until 80% of the operational work force have completed this first stage.
25. The proposed three-phased training package will be based on a combination of CBT materials and Tactical Decision- Making Exercises (TDEs) for phase one. A live exercise programme with some exercises being used to both validate the practicality of the policy and provide an assurance

that the necessary understanding and skills has been embedded within the workforce will compromise phase two. The third phase is a proposal for a new 'Urban Firefighting and Rescue course', which will further support the original acquisition training, this will be undertaken by all operational staff every two to three years.

26. Given the synergies between PN 633, PN 790 and this policy, the training solutions for all three – like the policies themselves – are consistent with each other. Equally and where possible, every opportunity has been taken to deliver this training jointly and in ways that emphasise the inter-related content of these topics.
27. A key policy focus is the issues and actions that an IC needs to consider and possibly implement at any incident where there is potential for emergency evacuation and/or mass rescue. The training solution will need to reflect that and, acknowledging these are infrequent events, recognise that this will be a 'new' topic for most, as few of those who will be undertaking the training will have any directly relevant operational experience to call on in support of their learning.
28. The CBT packages will provide the base knowledge and understanding of the three policies and procedures. To ensure all operational staff have an enhanced understanding of the policies and how they interact with each other, the following face-to-face briefings will be delivered in addition to the CBT packages:
  - Training to cover the Emergency Evacuation and Mass Rescue will be provided to all 1200 station-based officers (Lff, Sub.O, Stn.O) during a one day session combined with the High-Rise policy training.
  - Training will be provided to SCs and GCs over one day sessions including FSG, Emergency Evacuation/Mass Rescue through the delivery of a TDE and a 'train the trainer' session to enable it in turn to be delivered to watch based staff.
  - Training to DAC and AC group – will be provided in one day sessions.
29. This underlines the importance of ensuring that those involved in the design, planning and delivery of this training have a clear and finely calibrated understanding of the issues described in the policy. Some of these – such as assessing the indicators which may indicate that emergency evacuation/mass rescue is necessary and how to prioritise the deployment of resources to help/rescue those at greatest risk – are complex, relatively nuanced and will involve finely balanced judgements.
30. In practice, it is anticipated that this will mean that only a limited and carefully selected number of people should support the development and delivery of this training solution, otherwise there is a risk that the standards and interpretation applied will cover too wide a margin. Were this to happen, there would be a risk that key messages would be diluted, and the subtleties involved in assessing key issues could be lost.
31. Maintenance of competence requirements will be delivered through DaMOP and incident command training and revalidation.
32. A full program of staff communications will need to be developed to ensure all aspects of the policy are shared with all staff.

## **Finance comments**

33. The proposal recommends that the London Fire Commissioner approves the new Evacuation and Rescue Policy. Any training costs identified will be contained, where possible, within the existing training contract. If this is not possible a growth bid will need to be completed by the requesting department as part of the budget process to implement the policy.

### **Workforce comments**

34. The revised policy has been subject to Heads of Service and General Counsel consultation and was introduced at the BJCHSW meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> April 2020. Comments were received back from the FBU on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June, no significant issues have been identified. Consultation continues with the FBU with a view to reaching agreed outcomes in September 2020. CB will be kept informed of ongoing discussions.

### **Legal comments**

35. Under section 9 of the Policing and Crime Act 2017, the London Fire Commissioner (the "Commissioner") is established as a corporation sole with the Mayor appointing the occupant of that office. Under section 327D of the GLA Act 1999, as amended by the Policing and Crime Act 2017, the Mayor may issue to the Commissioner specific or general directions as to the manner in which the holder of that office is to exercise his or her functions.

36. Section 1 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 states that the Commissioner is the fire and rescue authority for Greater London.

37. The statutory basis for the actions proposed in this report is provided by section 7 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, under which the Commissioner must secure the provision of personnel, services and equipment necessary to efficiently meet all normal requirements for firefighting, and must secure the provision of training for personnel.

38. The Commissioner's Scheme of Governance provides that matters pertaining to the Transformation Delivery Plan (which includes recommendations flowing for the GTI) and matters which have a significant impact on service delivery are reserved to the LFC. Any significant future changes to this policy will require further Commissioner's approval.

39. In approving this policy, the Commissioner must comply with:

- The Human Rights Act 1998 and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Article 2 ECHR encompasses both negative obligations (which prevent public authorities taking lives) and positive obligations (requiring public authorities to take certain steps to protect lives). Public authorities are expected to take reasonable steps to protect a person's life if they know – or ought to know – that they are facing real and immediate risk. The taking of 'reasonable steps' should not place an impossible or disproportionate burden on the authority. The Commissioner recognises that meeting the Article 2 obligations in the exceptional circumstances encompassed by this policy is likely to depend upon and require nuanced, informed, and robust decision making. Those decisions may involve consideration of the existence of saveable life and the extent of the risk presented to firefighters in achieving saveable life, and may require the decision maker to assess and strike a balance between the existence and extent of risk to members of the public and to firefighters. Those decisions may have to be taken rapidly and under pressure. Such decisions may properly be subject to scrutiny in subsequent legal proceedings. The Commissioner in adopting this policy has sought to identify and provide all assistance to those charged with this responsibility to equip them to reach Article 2 compliant decisions, which are capable of withstanding that scrutiny.

- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. Section 2 of the 1974 Act imposes a general duty on the employer to 'ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all of his employees.' This general duty extends (amongst other things) to the plant and systems of work, the provision of information, instruction, training and supervision and to the provision and maintenance of a working environment that is, so far as reasonably practicable, without risks to health and adequate as regards facilities and arrangements for welfare at work. Section 3 of the 1974 Act imposes a general duty to 'ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that persons not in his employment who may be affected thereby are not thereby exposed to risks to their health or safety.' In the exceptional circumstances encompassed by this policy, the Commissioner recognises that striking the correct balance between these two general duties is likely to depend upon and require nuanced, informed, and robust decision making. Those decisions may have to be taken rapidly and under pressure. Such decisions may properly be subject to scrutiny in subsequent legal proceedings. The Commissioner in adopting this policy has sought to identify and provide all assistance to those charged with this responsibility to equip them to reach decisions which strike a lawful balance between those competing duties and which are capable of withstanding that scrutiny.
- When carrying out its functions, the Commissioner, as the fire and rescue authority for Greater London, is required to 'have regard to the Fire and Rescue National Framework prepared by the Secretary of State (Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004, section 21).
- Any relevant national guidance.

40. By direction dated 1 April 2018, the Mayor set out those matters, for which the Commissioner would require the prior approval of either the Mayor or the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience (the "Deputy Mayor").
41. Paragraph 3.1 of Part 3 of that direction requires the Commissioner to consult with the Deputy Mayor as far as practicable in the circumstances before a decision is taken on (inter alia) any "[c] decision that can be reasonably considered to be novel, contentious or repercussive in nature, irrespective of the monetary value of the decision involved (which may be nil)" and this decision should be considered to be repercussive in nature.

### **Sustainability implications**

42. SDIA submitted recommends that the introduction of this policy has a neutral sustainability impact.

### **Equalities implications**

43. The London Fire Commissioner and decision takers are required to have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (s149 of the Equality Act 2010) when exercising our functions and taking decisions.
44. It is important to note that consideration of the Public Sector Equality Duty is not a one-off task. The duty must be fulfilled before taking a decision, at the time of taking a decision, and after the decision has been taken.
45. The protected characteristics are: Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Pregnancy and maternity, Marriage and civil partnership (but only in respect of the requirements to have due

regard to the need to eliminate discrimination), Race (ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality), Religion or belief (including lack of belief), Sex, and Sexual orientation.

46. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires us, in the exercise of all our functions (i.e. everything we do), to have due regard to the need to:
47. Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct.
48. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
49. Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
50. Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
51. Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic where those disadvantages are connected to that characteristic;
52. Take steps to meet the needs of people who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
53. Encourage people who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
54. The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.
55. Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard to the need to:
  - a. tackle prejudice, and
  - b. promote understanding.
56. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is attached. The EIA showed an overall positive impact on certain protected characteristic groups of people and raised areas that require further consideration. These include looking at ways for operational crews to be able to inform and instruct residents of a high-rise premises in the event of a fire, where English is not their first language. This will include considering the feasibility of using pictogram style messaging and utilising the language skills within our current staff. These will be considered and worked through prior to the policy going live. The LFB Inclusion team have agreed to support this process.
57. The EIA identified positive impacts. The provisions made in this policy are designed to increase the feasibility of the evacuation and rescue of people. This increase in feasibility applied to the protected characteristics of age; disability; pregnancy and maternity; and race. This was either based on assisting occupants with mobility issues and/or requiring assistance or the soft analysis indicating the likely demographic of a high-rise building. There was a neutral impact against other characteristics.

58. Consultation with representative continues to take place. Further consultation with Equalities Support Groups and the Inclusion Team will take place as part of ongoing review of the policy.

List of Appendices

<b>Appendix</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Protective Marking</b>
1.	Evacuation and Rescue Policy	
2.	Equality Impact Assessment	

# Evacuation and Rescue

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New policy number:  
Old instruction number:  
Issue date: **July 2020**  
Reviewed as current: **July 2020**  
Owner:  
Responsible work team: **Incident Command Policy and Assurance**

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## Key Point summary

### Information on task or event

- PN 800
- ePIP
- MDT
- On site representative
- Premises information box
- Premises design
- Premises use
- Information signage
- Planned evacuation strategy
- Contingency plans

### Information about Resources

- PDA – declaration of the size of the incident
- Aerial – Type – Size
- Weight of attack
- Premises plans
- Fixed installations
- Fire escape hoods
- Leaky Feeders
- Drone
- Other Emergency Responders
- Local Authority/LALO
- Utility companies

### Information about Risk and Benefit

- MDT
- Access
- Life risk/number of people
- Potential rapid fire spread
- Premises construction
- Use of premises
- Vulnerable People
- Fire survival guidance (FSG)
- Change of evacuation strategy

## Gathering and thinking

### Objectives

- Save life
- Prevent fire spread
- Extinguish the fire
- Confirm current evacuation strategy
- Secure and protect escape routes
- Firefighter safety
- Request further resources if required
- Consider Emergency Evacuation and/or Mass Rescue of the public
- If declared, implement Major Incident Procedure

### Communicating

- Fireground Radio
- Breathing Apparatus Communications
- Leaky feeders
- Airwave Radio/Airwave tactical advisor
- Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Protocol (JESIP)
- Brigade Control

### Controlling

- Incident Command Pump/Vehicle
- Planned evacuation strategy
- Cordons
- Safety Officers/external spotters
- Operational Sectorisation
- Functional Sectorisation
- Appropriate levels of supervision
- Key Decision Log
- Analytical Risk Assessment

### Plan

- Identify the 'responsible person' or their 'on-site representative'
- Confirm the current planned evacuation strategy e.g. 'Stay Put', 'Progressive horizontal', 'Delayed', etc. and that its working
- Implement procedures appropriate to the premises and situation e.g. high rise, FSG, etc.
- Identify safe routes in and out of the premises
- Identify signs of rapid escalation of fire, heat or smoke e.g. multiple calls/FSG's, reports of deteriorating conditions internally, external fire spread
- Identify the number of people believed involved and where possible their last known location
- If multiple people need to be evacuated from the premises consider declaring 'Emergency Evacuation' and/or 'Mass Rescue'
- When declared confirm this is now a 'Major incident'
- Send a METHANE message
- Confirm you have sufficient resources to implement these procedures, if not request additional resources
- The IC should confirm with Brigade Control that the current evacuation strategy e.g. 'Stay Put' is still appropriate and what advice should be given to emergency callers
- Implement JESIP
- Devise a systematic evacuation plan
- Appoint safety officers
- Implement cordons
- Gather information from those leaving the premises
- Utilise other emergency responders or on site representatives to identify a suitable place to shelter those displaced

# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 London Fire Brigade s (LFB) priority at any incident is to save life. Evacuation and rescue will often play a supporting role in achieving this. The LFB attends many incidents where an evacuation is already in progress or is required.
- 1.2 The purpose of this policy is to
  - identify the hazards associated with evacuation, emergency evacuation, rescue and/or mass rescue to support the Incident Commander (IC) to undertake a suitable and sufficient assessment to inform when and how these activities should be implemented.
  - explain what is meant by the terms planned evacuation , emergency evacuation , rescue and mass rescue at fires in premises.
  - outline the various planned evacuation strategies that may be encountered when responding to fires in premises
  - identify the sources and types of information relating to evacuation that should be gathered during operational information gathering activities such as 7(2)d visits
  - describe the factors that need to be considered by the IC on arrival and, if the incident escalates, help the IC plan for and implement emergency evacuation, rescue and/or mass rescue.
- 1.3 Although this policy is primarily concerned with fires in premises, the principles that are described here can be applied at other incidents where evacuation, emergency evacuation, rescue and/or mass rescue is required.
- 1.4 It should be noted that planned evacuation and/or rescues can occur simultaneously, and can commence before the arrival of the LFB at an incident. The occupants of a premises may self-evacuate and emergency evacuation or rescues may be initiated by other emergency responders or the on site representative, such as a concierge or a waking or fire watch.

## 2 Hazards

A broad range of hazards can be encountered when attending an incident involving evacuation **and/or rescue** many of which are particular to the nature of the premises and the incident involved. For example, physiological and psychological demands are likely to be increased for both evacuees and emergency service responders in large or complex premises due to the necessity for persons to evacuate or be rescued over relatively long travel distances.

The level of risk may also be raised by other constraints associated with the premises design such as the heightened risk of congestion during the evacuation of buildings with a single staircase which can intensify the amount of physical effort required and/or the level of anxiety experienced by those who are evacuating or engaged in rescue or firefighting activities.

The most common forms of hazards include the following:

- 2.1 **Access and egress** – vehicular access and/or escape routes to and from the premises may become congested or obstructed by persons leaving the premises.
- 2.2 **Large numbers of people** – the challenge of managing a large number of people who may be affected by the incident and/or are leaving the premises.
- 2.3 **Unpredictable behaviour among evacuees** – those leaving the premises may be anxious, traumatised or injured, leading to unexpected behaviour and potential non-compliance with

either the planned evacuation strategy or direction from LFB personnel and other emergency responders.

- 2.4 **Conflicting priorities and moral pressure to act** – the demands of supporting an evacuation or rescues and dealing with the incident may overwhelm available emergency service resources at the scene. Responders, and the IC in particular, may be faced with unrealistic public expectations to act immediately, even if the incident is beyond the capacity of the resources that are present at the time.
- 2.5 **Communication problems** – difficulties in providing advice or direction to persons in the premises due to the absence, limitations and/or malfunction of systems such as emergency service radio systems, fire detection and alarm systems. Difficulties can also be encountered when there are persons present, who for a variety of reasons, may not be able to understand or follow instructions or advice.
- 2.6 **Irrespirable or toxic atmosphere** – the presence of smoke or other harmful substances in the premises and evacuation routes may make it difficult and/or impossible for persons to breathe without respiratory protective equipment. This situation is likely to result in people within the premises being unable and/or unwilling to evacuate and may also lead to the contamination of evacuees, emergency responders and/or the environment by substances other than the products of combustion.
- 2.7 **Inaccurate situational awareness** – in more complex incidents it may be difficult for the IC to maintain full situational awareness. Uncertainty about the number and location of persons involved it may not be possible to accurately determine how many people require evacuation or rescue, their locations and/or vulnerability, and/or how many people have already been accounted for.
- 2.8 **People with mobility issues requiring evacuation** - Individual occupants may not be able to evacuate a premises unaided due to their physical characteristics (such as ill health, disability, excessive bodyweight and age) or incapacity due to the effect of drugs or alcohol. The presence of people with impaired mobility may increase congestion in escape routes, reducing their capacity for other evacuees and to provide access for firefighters and other responders entering the building.

### 3 Definitions

- 3.1 For LFB operations to be effective, it is important that all personnel have a consistent and clear understanding of the terms planned evacuation, emergency evacuation, rescue and mass rescue. Personnel also need to be aware of what is meant by vulnerable people, absolute and relative safety, responsible person and on-site representative.
- 3.2 **Planned Evacuation** – A pre-determined strategy for a premises to secure the removal of any persons in or around the premises to a place of safety. The responsibility for determining the strategy rests with the Responsible Person. The different types of planned evacuation strategies are described in Section 4.
- 3.3 **Emergency Evacuation** – The immediate and unplanned movement of people assisted by LFB personnel or other emergency responders away from actual or potential danger towards a place of relative or ultimate safety using recognised or normal means of escape, in circumstances where:
  - a planned evacuation strategy does not exist for the premises and the IC decides that an evacuation is necessary

- the planned evacuation strategy has not taken place and the IC decides that an emergency evacuation is necessary
  - it is determined that the planned evacuation strategy, including a stay put strategy, is no longer tenable and/or is not working effectively
- 3.4 It should be noted that both evacuation and emergency evacuation can be either full or partial i.e. they can be applied to the entire premises or just a part of it (e.g. a wing of a hospital).
- 3.5 **Rescue** – The act of helping a person(s) who are threatened with immediate harm and require assistance to move away from danger towards a place of relative or ultimate safety.
- 3.6 **Mass Rescue** – The act of helping a large number of people that are threatened with immediate harm and who require assistance to move away from the danger towards a place of relative or ultimate safety. This is likely to involve the deployment of a large number of LFB personnel and/or other emergency responders.
- 3.7 **Vulnerable people** – anyone with a characteristic or condition that could impair their ability to leave a premises without assistance. It is not possible to be definitive about those who may need help to evacuate, but the people most likely to be encountered during an incident include young children, the frail elderly, people with limited mobility and people who have:
- visual and/or hearing impairment
  - significantly high body weight
  - cognitive or mental health issues
  - problems understanding instructions or advice provided to them.
- The policy recognises that the nature and extent of an individual's characteristic or condition may make it difficult for both Brigade Control room officers and those attending an incident to reliably identify those who may need assistance.
- 3.8 Please also note that this description is specific to operational policy and that the Brigade and other agencies define vulnerability differently for other purposes e.g. safeguarding.
- 3.9 **Place of relative safety** - a place in which there is no immediate danger, but in which there might be future danger from fire. This may be within a staircase enclosure, adjacent corridor or area of the premises that is protected from fire/smoke spread by fire resisting construction and doors. It must also have an alternative route to a place of ultimate safety if needed.
- 3.10 **Place of ultimate safety** - a place in which there is no immediate further danger and no risk of fire, heat and/or smoke spreading to. e.g. outside the premises and beyond the hazard zone.
- 3.11 **Responsible Person** - a specific term under fire safety law referring to a person (an individual or a corporate entity) who has a measure of control over a premises
- 3.12 **On Site representative** – This could be a concierge, caretaker, waker or fire watch, receptionist, or another person who has been designated to meet the LFB on arrival at a fire at the premises.

## 4 Planned Evacuation Strategies

- 4.1 This section describes the fire evacuation strategies that personnel need to be aware of for operational planning purposes or when they are responding to incidents.
- 4.2 Evacuation will normally follow a planned strategy that has been assessed by the responsible person as appropriate for the premises. The evacuation strategy implemented by the

responsible person will vary with regard to factors such as the size of the premises, its use and occupancy.

- 4.3 The responsible person has a legal obligation to establish appropriate procedures to be followed by any people in or around the premises, including residents, in the event of serious and imminent danger and to advise them of evacuation strategies and the actions they should take. However, it cannot be assumed that this obligation has been discharged for everyone, as, for example, some people may only be visiting the premises.
- 4.4 Single private dwellings are not required by law to have a responsible person and therefore are not required to have a planned evacuation strategy. Where premises have been converted into flats or bedsits, they should have a responsible person (usually the landlord or managing agent) who makes residents aware of the evacuation strategy for the building. In most converted premises, a fire detection and alarm system will be installed in the staircases and corridors and the simultaneous evacuation strategy described below will apply.
- 4.5 Where necessary, the responsible person may have developed specific procedures that apply to the entire premises and/or to a specific person. When the procedures apply to an individual, they are known as Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (often referred to as PEEPs ) which are designed to assist in the evacuation of vulnerable people.
- 4.6 Most evacuation strategies are written specifically in the case of fire , but there are also specific and different strategies for different types of emergencies, such as bomb threats, terrorist attacks, or large scale flooding (see section 8).

#### **Premises with a stay put strategy**

- 4.7 Stay put is a predetermined strategy of the responsible person for a premises under which in the event of a fire elsewhere in the premises the occupants should be safe to remain where they are unless they are directly affected by fire, heat and/or smoke. The strategy relies on the principle of compartmentation combined with other fire safety provisions.
- 4.8 Compartmentation is a building design principle used in high rise and other premises which is intended to inhibit rapid fire spread within the building from one area to another by dividing the building into a series of fire resistant compartments (or boxes) which form a barrier to fire and the products of combustion
- 4.9 The responsible person through their fire risk assessment (FRA) should ascertain whether the compartmentation levels of the premises continue to be suitable for this evacuation strategy to be utilised. E.g. When the premises has undergone building works that could have affected the integrity of the compartmentation.
- 4.10 Under this strategy, the occupants of the affected dwelling evacuate but the occupants of other dwellings are usually safe to remain in their dwellings unless directly affected by fire, heat and/or smoke or they are advised to leave by the LFB or other emergency service personnel if the situation warrants such advice, for example, compartmentation in the premises is failing leading to unexpected fire spread to other parts of the premises.
- 4.11 Purpose-built blocks of flats or maisonettes operating a stay put strategy will not generally have a communal fire detection or alarm system. This is likely to impact on the amount of time and resources needed to effect an emergency evacuation, if stay put becomes untenable.
- 4.12 In premises identified to have increased the risk of fire/smoke spread due to issues such as, but not limited to, combustible cladding or a lack of compartmentation, the responsible person may have temporarily changed the stay put strategy to simultaneous evacuation. In these cases, fire detection and alarm systems may have been installed or a temporary simultaneous evacuation

protocol may have been adopted whereby fire marshals monitor the premises and are responsible for initiating evacuation if a fire occurs.

### **Simultaneous evacuation**

- 4.13 This strategy is normally applied within offices, shops, industrial and commercial premises, hotels and hostels.

**Single stage** - When the fire detection and alarm systems operates all occupiers immediately leave the premises and assemble at a pre-arranged location where a roll call will be undertaken.

**Multi stage** – as above, but allows for a short period of investigation by managers/staff before the fire detection and alarm systems are sounded (or cancelled) and any evacuation is initiated.

**NOTE - As detailed in paragraph 4.12, a premises such as purpose built blocks of flats may have a temporary simultaneous evacuation strategy to mitigate identified increased risks from fire, heat or smoke spread, arising from fire safety issues within the premises.**

### **Phased evacuation**

- 4.14 This strategy can apply in taller commercial high-rise premises that have been designed with smaller staircase capacity, higher levels of compartmentation and which are fitted with additional systems to detect and warn of fire and smoke.
- 4.15 When the fire detection and alarm system operate, only occupiers on the floor of origin and the floor above will evacuate immediately and all others will receive an alert.
- 4.16 All basement floors are treated as one zone and will be evacuated simultaneously if a warning is given in these areas.
- 4.17 If the alarm is not cancelled within a defined period of time, other floors will evacuate on a phased basis.
- 4.18 Some phased evacuation systems have a control panel that will allow the building manager to facilitate an increase in the number of floors being evacuated at the same time, the order in which floors evacuate, or switch to simultaneous evacuation of the whole building if safe to do so.

### **Progressive horizontal evacuation**

- 4.19 This is applicable in premises, such as hospitals or care homes, where the vulnerability of occupants due to age or infirmity means it would not be possible to evacuate all occupants simultaneously. This strategy is not applicable to residential high rise premises even though such premises may be occupied by vulnerable people.
- 4.20 These premises incorporate separate fire compartments called protected areas and appropriate systems to prevent fire and smoke spread. The fire detection and alarm systems will be aligned to the protected areas.
- 4.21 When a fire occurs, occupants of the affected compartment or those most at risk, are evacuated by staff but often only into an adjacent protected area rather than outside the premises. Those in other protected areas will be able to remain in bedrooms or wards, unless they are directly affected by heat, fire or smoke or it is deemed necessary by staff, Brigade personnel and/or other emergency responders to evacuate them.

## Delayed evacuation

- 4.22 This strategy is only adopted in premises used for treatment or care where it may not be desirable or practical to immediately evacuate occupants due to their vulnerability, because of their medical condition or the treatment they are receiving.
- 4.23 This strategy allows occupants to remain in their rooms but should only be used where there is enhanced compartmentation within a room or area and a member of staff stays with the occupant throughout the emergency, either to reassure them or prepare them for evacuation.
- 4.24 Where this strategy is adopted by the responsible person, a suitable evacuation strategy for the whole of the premises will still be required.

## Zonal evacuation

- 4.25 This strategy can be applied in larger premises and structures such as transport terminals, shopping centres and other large and complex areas.
- 4.26 These premises will provide additional compartmentation, systems to prevent fire/smoke spread and have designated fire zones . The aim is to reduce the need for large numbers of persons to be evacuated.
- 4.27 When the fire detection and alarm system actuates, only staff associated with the premises will be alerted and occupants of the affected zone or those at most risk will be evacuated by those staff. Occupants of other areas or zones are able to remain in place unless directly affected by fire, heat or smoke or are being evacuated by staff or an Emergency Evacuation is being carried out by LFB personnel or other emergency responders.

## 5 Planning

- 5.1 Operational information regarding evacuation should be gathered and recorded in accordance with [PN800 Management of Operational Risk Information](#).
- 5.2 All reasonable efforts should be made by station based staff to ascertain or confirm if the premises has a planned evacuation strategy for fire or a stay put strategy for the premises from the responsible person or their authorised on-site representative . If these are not available then they should seek advice from the Regulatory Fire Safety team responsible for their borough to assist them with the identification of the existing planned evacuation strategy or stay put strategy for that premises.
- 5.3 Operational planning considerations should also include circumstances where the responsible person s building design strategy is stay put or their planned evacuation strategy involves occupants remaining in the premises, e.g. progressive evacuation which is common in care homes and hospitals. These may become untenable due to an escalating fire, in which case, it may be necessary to implement an emergency evacuation, rescue or mass rescue, based on either a partial or full evacuation of the premises.
- 5.4 Operational planning activity should inform Station, Borough and Area training plans and, where appropriate, both the responsible person s evacuation strategy and any contingency plans identified as necessary should form part of exercises. Where appropriate, training exercises can also be used to both help develop and validate operational planning arrangements.

## 6 Initial considerations and actions

- 6.1 When responding to a fire in a premises where there are likely to be large numbers of people present, appliances and other vehicles should not be parked in places that may obstruct people who are or may need to evacuate the premises.
- 6.2 The IC should, as soon as reasonably practicable after arriving at an incident where a planned evacuation or emergency evacuation is either in progress or likely to be required, assess whether:
- the responsible person or their on-site representative is available
  - a planned evacuation strategy exists. This information may be available from the responsible person or the on-site representative, it may also be included within the premises information box, or an electronic premises information plate (ePIP) recorded on the ORD and the Mobile Data Terminal (MDT)
  - a planned evacuation is in progress and whether LFB assistance is required
  - the level of risk posed by the fire and its likely spread means that it is necessary to change the planned evacuation strategy e.g. to initiate an emergency evacuation
  - sufficient LFB and other emergency responder resources are present to facilitate an emergency evacuation as well as respond to other aspects of the incident
- 6.3 Once the IC has gathered as much of this information as reasonably practicable, the prevailing situation should be declared in a message to Brigade Control stating whether a planned evacuation, emergency evacuation and/or mass rescue is in progress, giving the extent of the planned evacuation, emergency evacuation and/or mass rescue and if required setting out what advice Brigade Control should give to emergency callers.
- 6.4 If an emergency evacuation and/or a mass rescue is declared then the IC must also declare a Major Incident ([PN 263 - Major Incident Procedure](#)) and send a METHANE message as soon as reasonably practicable, in order to promote shared situational awareness and to develop a coordinated response .
- 6.5 The IC should consider using personnel from other emergency services to assist with the emergency evacuation where it is safe to do so. E.g. Utilising the police to move people away from the hazard area.
- 6.6 Depending on the reasons for an emergency evacuation and/or mass rescue, the IC should consider whether a tactical withdrawal or emergency evacuation of responders is also required ([PN 496 - Tactical withdrawal, emergency evacuation and firefighter emergency](#)) and consider the impact on the emergency evacuation, rescue or the mass rescue of members of the public. It should be recognised that, if operations are suspended, the IC in consultation with Brigade Control need to make a decision, as to whether the stay put strategy (if in place) be revoked, if this hasn't been done already.

## 7 Operational considerations and actions

### Striking the right balance

- 7.1 The decision to initiate an emergency evacuation and/or mass rescue requires the IC to strike a proportionate balance between the prevailing risks and benefits. This cannot be exhaustively predicted in advance for every situation.
- 7.2 Advising large numbers of people to evacuate from a premises, through escape routes that may be affected by smoke, can have adverse as well as positive consequences. Any decision to

commence emergency evacuation is likely to cause disruption and may also lead to panic, a delay in tackling the fire, persons being injured or, in the most extreme case, fatalities.

- 7.3 Conversely, an appropriate and timely decision to evacuate may reduce the risk that people may be harmed or become trapped and increases the likelihood that an emergency evacuation or mass rescue will be successful.
- 7.4 Where emergency evacuation or mass rescue is required it will be important to prioritise, so far as it is reasonably practicable, those who are at the greatest and most imminent risk (see paragraph 7.9 below).

### **Emergency evacuation and mass rescue indicators**

- 7.5 The IC should be vigilant to the signs and symptoms that indicate the failure of the premises compartmentation, causing evacuation routes to become compromised, leading to an effect on the premises planned evacuation strategy or stay put strategy.

The factors listed below should be considered by the IC when deciding whether to implement an evacuation and/or mass rescue operation may include - but may not be limited to whether;

- multiple emergency calls (four or more 999 calls to the same address) or multiple fire survival guidance (FSG) calls, defined as three FSG calls or more from one premise type or a number of premises within a building; [PN 790 - Fire survival guidance calls](#)
- emergency or FSG calls are being received to the same building but from a location that is remote from the initial fire
- where it becomes apparent that Brigade Control is reaching capacity to manage the number of 999 calls and duration of individual FSG calls, the IC's situational awareness may be impaired.
- large numbers of people are evacuating
- there is rapid spread of fire or smoke, either externally or internally from one compartment and/or floor to another
- fire and/or products of combustion spread to locations within the premises remote from the original fire
- fire is spreading via external cladding
- reports of deteriorating conditions internally
- where it is not possible to deliver sufficient extinguishing media or, for other reasons, firefighting activity is not controlling or extinguishing the fire

This list is not exhaustive and other signs of the potential catastrophic failure of compartmentation may be observed.

- 7.6 These signs and symptoms, either in isolation or in combination, do not automatically mean that an emergency evacuation and/or mass rescue is required, but their presence should always be actively assessed by the IC.
- 7.7 When making their decision, the IC should also have regard to the legal powers to restrict the access of persons to premises or a place, for example by setting up a cordon ([Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004](#))

## Managing an emergency evacuation or mass rescue

7.8 When making a decision to implement emergency evacuation and/or mass rescue the IC's plan should, as far as practicable, prioritise those whose reported location means that they face the greatest risk. This should be assessed:

- in relation to their proximity to the location of the fire; and
- by having regard to the potential and likely speed of the spread of fire and smoke to locations that are remote from the compartment of origin

7.9 The IC's plan should also take into account:

- the availability of all safe routes in and out of the premises, including any places of relative safety (refuge)
- the advantages of designating separate evacuation and attack staircases and pathways in order to reduce the risk that firefighting operations may hinder evacuation (and vice versa) if available
- the number of persons believed to be involved
- the risk to occupants of flats furthest from ultimate safety (e.g. at the highest points of the premises)
- whether time and resources allow forcing entry to premises from which there is no answer
- people who may require additional assistance to evacuate
- the need to use fire escape hoods ([PN 934 - Fire escape hood](#))
- the need to devise a systematic evacuation plan and to develop a search plan for any unaccounted for or missing persons ([PN 803 - Search and rescue procedures within structures](#))
- whether evacuation is likely to be adversely affected by factors such as the number of available staircases, distance to be travelled and the weather conditions.
- the need to restrict access to the scene ([PN 415 - Cordons](#))
- the potential to protect and improve conditions within escape routes, for example by using fire engineering installed within the premises, deploying firefighters to protect stairwells, the use of smoke blockers, through tactical ventilation and the deployment of firefighting jets
- resources available and likely to be required to deliver the IC's emergency evacuation plan and to carry out any rescues (including rotation of teams to limit physiological and physical demands on personnel)
- the need to keep escape routes clear through hose management
- the maintenance of effective communication through the deployment of leaky feeders, other signal boosting equipment, including telemetry repeaters, use of Airwave and/or runners to overcome any incident communication problems
- the potential benefits of creating staging areas to, as far as practicable, keep personnel and equipment away from escape routes
- the need to appoint safety officers (both internally and externally) and to use other techniques such as thermal scanning both within and outside any structure, to monitor the incident and, in particular, to identify any signs or symptoms of a worsening situation

## Maintaining situational awareness

- 7.10 The IC should maintain situational awareness by undertaking regular 360 degree assessments of the incident scene throughout duration of the incident by deploying Safety Officers/spotters who can report on changing conditions relevant to the safety of the people and responders inside the building from all faces of the premises. The IC should also consider whether the use of aerial appliances, the National Police Air Service (NPAS) helicopter and/or LFB drone capability could help to provide a more comprehensive overview of the scene.
- 7.11 Information regarding the status and progress of the evacuation should continue to be shared and updated between responding services, Brigade Control and those attending or monitoring the incident on a regular and timely basis.
- 7.12 If a decision is made to change the evacuation strategy, it should be recorded as soon as practicably possible on the Key Decision Log (KDL) and shared with other attending emergency services [PN 828 recording decisions at incidents](#)
- 7.13 The IC should ensure that, as far as practicable, information is gathered from those leaving the premises;
- Where resources permit, these people should be directed to a suitable point or location so that they can share information, such as the flat number/location they have evacuated from and whether they know about any further people who might need assistance or rescue.
  - The IC should consider nominating an officer to liaise with the police or the on-site responsible person and task them with gathering and recording this information to assist the IC to make informed decisions regarding the priorities for any further rescues or other actions that may be required.
- 7.14 The IC should continue to make use of all available sources of information, such as the responsible person or their on-site representative, premises plans, fire detection and alarm systems, CCTV and/or any systems in premises fire control room. Senior Fire Safety Officers be used to provide advice on the use of such systems.
- 7.15 Where appropriate and seeking the advice of a Hazardous Materials Environmental Protection Officer (HMEPO), the use of chemical and meteorological data systems can help to define the overall hazard zone where smoke or any other hazardous substance has spread through the premises ([PN 796 - HAZMATS; fires and incidents involving hazardous substances](#)).

## Keeping those affected by the incident informed

- 7.16 The IC should consider and make full use of all available means to communicate with all affected persons including changes in advice. The options include Brigade Control, using fire detection and alarm systems, entry or internal phone systems, loudhailers, LFB drone and/or National Police Air Service (NPAS) Skyshout public address facilities.
- 7.17 Consideration should also be given to using the media (including social media) to convey key messages to the public, in consultation with other attending emergency services and the LFB Press Office to ensure a consistent message.
- 7.18 The IC should establish and maintain liaison with the responsible person and/or their on-site representative, other attending agencies where available and consider using non-LFB personnel to assist with the movement of people further away from the incident in circumstances where this is necessary for reasons of public safety and/or to effectively manage the incident basis.

## Humanitarian assistance and wider impacts

- 7.19 Having regard to nature and likely duration of incident, the IC should consider whether those being evacuated and otherwise displaced by the incident require shelter and/or welfare arrangements e.g. due to inclement weather or the likely duration of the incident. If rescues are being undertaken, the IC should establish a casualty handling area.
- 7.20 If such facilities are needed, the IC should liaise with police, the ambulance service and local authority to secure adequate provision of rest and humanitarian assistance centres. For short-term events, consider any options that may exist to provide affected persons with shelter in near-by premises or by use resources such as buses for this purpose.
- 7.21 The IC should consider potential effect on LFB and other responders, e.g. psychological effects, if there are seriously injured or large numbers of people involved and identify any immediate mitigation options. See [PN 915 - Recognising and coping with potentially traumatic events](#)

## 8 Other incidents

- 8.1 This section provides information regarding evacuation at incidents other than fires.
- 8.2 Decisions regarding evacuation at non-fire incidents should be considered and implemented in conjunction with the policy or policies relevant to the incident type being attended. These incidents include;
- an act of terrorism
  - the actual or threatened release of hazardous substances
  - an unstable or collapsed structure
  - the risk of explosion
  - severe weather, including widespread flooding
  - transport incidents
- 8.3 The principles and concepts set out in sections 4 – 7 above can be used during the above incidents to assist with the evacuation and/or rescue of persons involved, noting that in some instances the lead responsibility for these activities will rest with other organisations e.g. the police.
- 8.4 It should be noted that any premises or location may have an alternative evacuation strategy for hazards other than fire. These additional strategies may be based on different practices to the strategy relating to fire and may include concepts such as invacuation and lockdown areas to deal with the threat posed by an intruder. [PN 259 - Terrorist related incidents](#) and [PN 882 - Marauding terrorist attack \(MTA\) cold zone working](#)

## 9 References

- 9.1 The following documents should be considered when utilising this policy:
- [PN 259 - Terrorist related incidents](#)
  - [PN 263 - Major Incident Procedure](#)
  - [PN 415 - Cordons](#)
  - [PN 411 Notification of contamination/possible contamination by material\(s\) that may be hazardous to health](#)
  - [PN 496 - Tactical withdrawal, emergency evacuation and firefighter emergency](#)
  - [PN 790 - Fire survival guidance calls](#)
  - [PN 796 - HAZMATS; fires and incidents involving hazardous substances](#)
  - [PN800 Management of Operational Risk Information](#)

- [PN 803 - Search and rescue procedures within structures](#)
- [PN 828 recording decisions at incidents](#)
- [PN 882 - Marauding terrorist attack \(MTA\) cold zone working](#)
- [PN 915 - Recognising and coping with potentially traumatic events](#)
- [PN 934 - Fire escape hood](#)
- [Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004](#)

# Document history

## Assessments

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

EIA	01/04/20	SDIA	09/03/20	HSWIA	15/04/20	RA	15/04/20
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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

## Subject list

You can find this policy under the following subjects.


## Freedom of Information Act exemptions

This policy/procedure has been securely marked due to:

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

## Standard Equality Impact Assessment Form

### Question 1: Which Team, Department, or Project Board is responsible for carrying out the Standard Equality Impact Assessment?

Name	OP & A
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### Question 2: Lead assessor's contact details

Name	<b>Greg Ashman</b>	Mobile No	07775825852
Job title	Group Commander	Extension	
Department	OP & A	Email	greg.ashman@london-fire.gov.uk

### Question 3: Title of / policy (please include the policy number) / project / report / proposed change / initiative / decision

Policy Title: Evacuation and Rescue, no number currently allocated.

This new policy has come about due to the Grenfell Tower investigation and identified issues with evacuating and rescuing large numbers of the public from a high rise residential premises. This policy should align with PN 633 High Rise firefighting and Policy 790 Fire Survival Guidance.

### Question 4: Is the work...

New	This is a new policy	A complete redesign	
A small change or policy review		Other (e.g. reviewed as current)	

### Question 5: Briefly outline the aim and the purpose of the work

Aim	The aim of this policy is to assist incident commanders and firefighters in understanding when to consider and implement emergency evacuation and mass rescue of residential high rise premises.
Purpose	<p>The purpose of this policy is to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identify the hazards associated with emergency evacuation, rescue and/or mass rescue and enable the Incident Commander (IC) to understand when these activities should be undertaken</li> <li>explain what is meant by the terms 'evacuation', 'emergency evacuation', 'rescue' and 'mass rescue' at fires in buildings, some of which maybe covered by the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.</li> <li>define the various planned evacuation strategies that may be encountered when responding to fires in buildings</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>describe the factors that need to be considered by the IC on arrival and, if the incident escalates, help the IC plan for emergency evacuation, rescue and/or mass rescue.</li> </ul>
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Question 6: Has an EIA been conducted previously? (please tick)	
Yes	No
If yes, attach a copy. If no, state the reason.	

Question 7: Who is it intended to benefit / Who does the change affect?			
Staff	X	Wider public	X
Other (please state)	The intended benefit is to the public and our firefighters and officers.		

**Initial Equality Impact Assessment – Screening Stage**

Complete the table below to see whether you need to complete a full Equality Impact Assessment.

Only positive impacts identified: <b>No full EIA required</b>	Only neutral impacts identified <b>No full EIA required</b>	One or more adverse impacts identified <b>Full EIA required</b>
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Question 8: Identifying the impacts	
Consider the relevance of the policy / project / decision on each group below and describe any impacts identified.  <b>NB: Some characteristics may attract multiple impacts e.g. age: positive impact on older people, adverse impact on younger people.</b>	
Protected Characteristic	Level of Impact ( Positive impact, neutral impact, adverse impact)
<b>Age</b> (younger, older or particular age group)	<b>Positive impact</b> - the provisions made in this policy are designed to increase the feasibility of rescue of persons in age groups where their mobility or ability to self evacuate are likely to be hindered.
<b>Disability</b> (physical, sensory, mental health, learning disability, long term illness, hidden)	<b>Positive impact</b> - the provisions made in this policy are designed to increase the feasibility of rescue of people where their mobility or ability to self evacuate are likely to be hindered.
<b>Gender reassignment</b> (someone proposing to/undergoing/	<b>Neutral impact</b> - Whilst there is a likely overall improvement to chances of being rescued it is not anticipated that there is an

undergone a transition from one gender to another)	enhanced impact on this protected characteristic group
<b>Marriage / Civil Partnership</b> (married as well as same-sex couples)	<b>Neutral impact</b>
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	<b>Positive impact</b> - the provisions made in this policy are designed to increase the feasibility of rescue of persons where their mobility or ability to self evacuate are likely to be hindered when pregnant or carrying a baby.
<b>Race</b> (including nationality, colour, national and/or ethnic origins)	<b>Positive impact</b> - The changes to this policy have been made as a result of the learning outcomes from the Grenfell Tower fire. Grenfell Tower residents were racially diverse. Based on Grenfell alone, the changes to this policy should have a positive impact on these groups in a similar circumstance. However, more research is required in this area to determine impacts to this group across London (detailed below).
<b>Religion or Belief</b> (people of any religion, or no religion, or people who follow a particular belief (not political))	<b>Neutral impact</b>
<b>Sex</b> (men and women)	<b>Neutral impact</b>
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> (straight, bi, gay and lesbian people)	<b>Neutral impact</b>
Are there any other groups this work may affect? i.e. carers, non-binary people, people with learning difficulties, neurodiverse people, people with dyslexia, ADHD, care leavers, ex-offenders, people living in areas of disadvantage, homeless people, people on low income / poverty?	<p><b>Positive impact</b></p> <p>Based on the outcomes of the Grenfell Tower safety and review project, it has been identified that there may be an increased likelihood of these groups of people residing in high rise premises although more detailed data analysis in this area is required (detailed below).</p> <p>Additional work: It is intended that this policy does not go-live and be used until adequate training has been provided. There are a number of areas that require additional work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data analysis considering the occupant composition of high rise buildings. The assumptions made within this EIA will be tested and findings of the analysis will enable a further EIA to be undertaken and a subsequent review of the policy.</li> <li>• Communication to residents is key at a high rise incident, particularly where an evacuation or rescues are required. Work will be undertaken to consider the use of pictogram cards to be used to instruct and inform residents in this event.</li> <li>• There is a range of language skills within our current operational staff. These skills could potentially be utilised at high rise and other incidents which affect diverse communities. Work will be undertaken to</li> </ul>

	<p>consider the feasibility of this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High rise incidents may be traumatic for both staff and residents. The policy does not specifically detail guidance regarding this, but is supported by PN915 – Recognising and coping with potentially traumatic events and a dedicated Counselling and Trauma Services team.</li> <li>• Further work is required to assess the various risks associated with the rescue of different groups, particularly where there may be complexities, and to identify any appropriate control measures to address those. Any required amendments will be made to this and associated policies before implementation.</li> </ul>
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**Question 9: Has your assessment been able to demonstrate the following?**

<b>Positive impact</b>	The creation of the new policy will have a positive impact through analysis on a number of protected characteristics including age, disability, pregnancy and maternity and race. However, further data analysis and possible subsequent policy amendments are being considered.
<b>Neutral impact</b>	
<b>Adverse impact</b>	
Any other comments	

**Question 10: Meeting the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) under s149 Equality Act 2010**

How have you considered whether this project / policy / decision does the following:

1. Eliminates unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
2. Advances equality of opportunity between different groups, and
3. Fosters good relations between different groups.

What we must do under law	The Human Rights Act 1998 and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Article 2 ECHR encompasses both negative obligations (which prevent public authorities taking lives) and positive obligations (requiring public authorities to take certain steps to protect lives). Public authorities are expected to take reasonable steps to protect a person's life if they know – or ought to know – that they are facing real and immediate risk. The taking of 'reasonable steps' should not place an impossible or disproportionate burden on the authority. The LFC recognises that meeting the Article 2 obligations in the exceptional circumstances encompassed by this policy is likely to depend upon and require nuanced, informed, and robust decision making. Those decisions may involve consideration of the existence of saveable life and the extent of the risk presented
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	<p>to firefighters in achieving saveable life, and may require the decision maker to assess and strike a balance between the existence and extent of risk to members of the public and to firefighters. Those decisions may have to be taken rapidly and under pressure. Such decisions may properly be subject to scrutiny in subsequent legal proceedings. The LFC in adopting this policy has sought to identify and provide all assistance to those charged with this responsibility to equip them to reach Article 2 compliant decisions, which are capable of withstanding that scrutiny.</p> <p>The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. Section 2 of the 1974 Act imposes a general duty on the employer to 'ensure, so as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all of his employees.' This general duty extends (amongst other things) to the plant and systems of work, the provision of information, instruction, training and supervision and to the provision and maintenance of a working environment that is, so far as reasonably practicable, without risks to health and adequate as regards facilities and arrangements for welfare at work. Section 3 of the 1974 Act imposes a general duty to 'ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that persons not in his employment who may be affected thereby are not thereby exposed to risks to their health or safety.' In the exceptional circumstances encompassed by this policy, the LFC recognises that striking the correct balance between these two general duties is likely to depend upon and require nuanced, informed, and robust decision making. Such decisions may require an assessment to be made as to whether, and if so to what extent, it is or is not reasonably practicable to expose firefighters to increased risk in order to ensure that all reasonably practicable steps are taken to protect members of the public from risk. Those decisions may have to be taken rapidly and under pressure. Such decisions may properly be subject to scrutiny in subsequent legal proceedings. The LFC in adopting this policy has sought to identify and provide all assistance to those charged with this responsibility to equip them to reach decisions which strike a lawful balance between those competing duties and which are capable of withstanding that scrutiny.</p>
Eliminate discrimination	No discriminatory impacts have been identified
Advance equality of opportunity	The changes to this policy have been made to improve existing high rise procedures as a result of the review of the Grenfell Tower fire. The changes are designed to positively impact protected characteristic groups who may be more at risk of fire; who may be more significantly impacted by fire; or whose mobility inhibits evacuation in the event of a fire in a high rise building. The changes to the policy are designed to mitigate the disadvantages these groups face in relation to fire.
Foster good relations	Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it is part of the Equality Act 2010 and PSED; Clear published policies which demonstrate consideration of all the London community is one of the means by which this can be done.

**Question 11: What data has been used to inform the Impact Assessment? (E.g. GLA Datastore, Census Data, Staff Monitoring Data, Staff Survey Data, Local Borough Population Demographics).**

**Question 12: Have you consulted with staff, LFB support groups, trade unions, public / service users, and / or others to help assess for impacts? (please tick)**

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, who was involved and how were they involved? If not, why not?			
Who?	LFB Legal Team, LFB Community Safety Team, LFB Regulatory Fire Safety Team, Representative Bodies, LFB Inclusion Team.		
How?	Consultation has been sought through three peer reviews.		
If no consultation, why not?			
Data Source	How it has been used		
<b>DataStore</b>	This was used to gain an understanding of the demography of areas with high concentrations of residential and commercial high rise premises and the people that utilise them.		

**Question 13: How have you ensured your policy, project or proposal uses inclusive language that doesn't unintentionally discriminate against certain groups?**

	<b>Outcome</b>
Tools used to assess inclusive language e.g. <a href="#">gender bias screening tools</a> , Stonewall toolkit on inclusive policies, speaking with Inclusion Team, <a href="#">Comms Style Guide</a> , <a href="#">Policy 0370: Writing Policies and Procedures</a> .	
Utilisation of the style guide	Consistent language
Utilisation of policy 370	Consistent approach to policy format
Agreeing terminology with the LFB legal team	Terminology agreed

For guidance and support, please contact the Inclusion Team (Second Floor, Union Street, or email [safertogether@london-fire.gov.uk](mailto:safertogether@london-fire.gov.uk)) or a relevant Equality Support Group

