



LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

LFC-23-065

Background Checks and Security Vetting

Report to:	Date:
Service Delivery Board	24 May 2023
Investment & Finance Board	1 June 2023
Commissioner's Board	13 June 2023
Fire & Resilience Board	29 June 2023
London Fire Commissioner	

Report by:
Operational Resilience Planning Manager

Report classification:
For decision

For publication

PART ONE

Non-confidential facts and advice to the decision-maker

Executive Summary

This report provides recommendations to deliver the vetting requirements for all Brigade staff, detailing the legal position for current Brigade staff to have a form of background checks in accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (Exemptions) Order 1975, with confirmation from legal counsel that a basis exists for seeking an enhanced DBS check for spent convictions and cautions and police held information for firefighters who may provide treatment or aid to casualties as part of their operational duties.

The report identifies resource requirements to deliver the vetting process noted at the Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning Committee in February 2023 and the recommendation from His Majesty Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in its report and that existing arrangements where fire and rescue services could only apply for a basic DBS check for staff was an oversight that required amendment. It was advised and agreed that government should take forward the remaining recommendations from the HMICFRS report to include amending relevant regulations so that fire and rescue services are able to undertake enhanced checks. The HMICFRS stated that the Home Office work with the fire and rescue sector to arrive at an appropriate legislatively enabled solution that makes detailed provisions for fire and rescue services. Detail of all background checks/vetting levels are provided in Appendix 1.

Recommended decisions

For the Deputy Mayor

That the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience approves the London Fire Commissioner to commit revenue expenditure of up to £255,658 over the periods 2023/24 and 2024/25 and a further £78,000 per annum thereafter for the purposes of implementing arrangements for staff background checks.

1 Introduction and background

1.1 As noted in the Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning Committee in February

2023 London Fire Commissioner called for fire and rescue services to have powers to undertake enhanced DBS checks for all staff. The fire and rescue services are currently the only emergency service that does not routinely carry out enhanced checks.

- 1.2 The Brigade currently generally complete basic checks for staff notwithstanding the confidence levels noted in paragraph 1.12. There are small teams within Community Safety that are subject to Enhanced DBS checks noted in PN 302 paragraph 4.2 for posts that involve substantial access to children.
- 1.3 A report was submitted to the Commissioners Board 20 June 2018 (LFC-0032) by the Interim Assistant Director in Peoples Services to seek approval to amend the Brigade's arrangements for basic level criminal conviction checks. The proposed arrangements aimed to continue to meet the government's Baseline Personnel Security Standards (BPSS). It was agreed that checks will need to be undertaken through the Disclosure and Barring Service for England and Wales and applicants would be responsible for obtaining their own disclosure certificate and sharing this with the Brigade prior to appointment. It was proposed that checks should only be undertaken on new appointments and the Brigade would no longer seek renewal certificates every three years or require checks to be undertaken on promotion.
- 1.4 The report (LFC-0032) stated that there was no requirement to renew the BPSS once it had been approved, besides the rechecking of immigration status of non-EU citizens. At this time General Counsel confirmed that there was no legal requirement to renew basic disclosure checks every three years at this time, or over any other period or at all. There was also no legal requirement to renew a basic check on a promotion. It was therefore proposed that the Brigade cease the requirement for basic renewal checks. The report stated that staff are already required under their contract of employment and/or under the Brigade's disciplinary rules (PN481) to inform the Brigade if there are arrests or charges (operational staff); or if they are convicted of any offence. It also stated that previous anecdotal evidence showed that no action has ever been taken against an existing member of staff because of information obtained on a renewed basic disclosure check.
- 1.5 The Commissioner's Board approved the report following recommendations for consultation with the representative bodies in June 2018:
 - Cessation of basic disclosure check renewals and basic level checks on promotion. Basic checks would only be obtained for new joiners, in line with the requirement of the government's Baseline Personnel Security Standards (BPSS), and
 - That basic checks are to be obtained by prospective staff via the Disclosure and Barring Service for England and Wales (DBS) online service. The £25 fee was to be reimbursed to employees on joining the Brigade through the expenses system.
- 1.6 The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Prevention Committee has led a proposal for the inclusion of the fire and rescue service authority employees in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (Exemptions) Order 1975.
- 1.7 Recently His Majesties Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire & Rescue Services

(HMICFRS) made recommendations to the government in its recent report into the culture of the fire and rescue service nationally, highlighting the need to have a nationally consistent approach to background checks. This includes ensuring that fire and rescue services can carry out enhanced checks on staff like other emergency services currently do. Whilst standard DBS checks are an improvement on the level of vetting fire and rescue service staff get, enhanced DBS checks can better identify concerns with applicants for jobs, such as any police warnings and reprimands and whether applicants are considered unsuitable for working with children or vulnerable adults.

- 1.8 The Ministry of Justice has now laid before Parliament a statutory instrument to make this amendment following a business case from the NFCC following support from the Home Office and Welsh Government. The change will enable Standard Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks to be conducted on all fire and rescue authority (FRA) employees. This new eligibility to carry out standard DBS checks would exist in addition to existing access to basic checks for all FRA employees and Enhanced DBS with a check of the relevant adults or children barred list for those employees who undertake certain activities.
- 1.9 Whilst the Government intention is clear that fire and rescue services will now be able to do standard DBS checks the recommendation from the HMICFRS in its report was that existing arrangements for fire and rescue services were an oversight that required amendment. It was advised and agreed that government should take forward the remaining recommendations from the Inspectorate's report to include amending relevant regulations so that fire and rescue services are able to undertake enhanced checks like other emergency services, with the Inspectorate stating that the Home Office should work with the fire and rescue sector to arrive at an appropriate legislatively enabled solution that makes detailed provisions for fire and rescue services.
- 1.10 An HMICFRS Report published on 30 March 2023 included a range of recommendations referencing vetting checks, including recommendation 6 that FRAs incorporate employees in the RO (Exceptions) Order 1975 so that they are eligible for the appropriate DBS checks by January 2024. Recommendation 8 detailed that the Fire Standards Board in liaison with the NFCC should review the existing standards and underpinning guidance of background checks and clarify the minimum requirements for all staff roles, particularly those which have access to vulnerable members of the public. Recommendation 9 identified the need for all FRAs to immediately review their current background checks arrangements to ensure that suitable and sufficient checks are in place to safeguard their staff and communities they serve, with all appropriate checks submitted for all existing, new staff and volunteers according to their roles as identified by the Fire Standard Board.

Current Position

- 1.11 People Services currently manage the process for DBS checks for staff. They previously managed the higher vetting of existing Brigade staff formally undertaken by an FRSG and two FRSC posts who handled Non-Police Personnel Vetting (NPPV2), Security Check (SC) and Developed Vetting (DV) applications for staff identified as carrying out specific roles that required enhanced vetting status. Due to staff changes and in line with protective security the higher-level vetting

process is undertaken by Operational Resilience & Control (OR&C).

1.12 As of April 2023, approximately 36% of the Brigade workforce have no current vetting or have never had any form of vetting whilst in Brigade. This is broken down to the relevant staff groups below.

- FRS staff without DBS/Vetting record – 25%
- Control staff without DBS/Vetting record – 24%
- Operational staff without DBS/Vetting record – 39%

1.13 OR&C coordinate the Brigade NFCC CT responsibilities which includes Protective Security to ensure that there is alignment with the NFCC Prevention Committee. Our Counter Terrorism Embed in OR&C leads this workstream with the NFCC Protective Security lead from Tyne & Wear FRS

1.14 Legal advice was requested in March 2023, prior to the introduction of the legislation mentioned in para 1.8 of this report, to identify the legal tests for Brigade staff to be DBS checked under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975

1.15 The advice received indicated that in the light of the statutory powers under Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 s 44 and in particular the relevant provisions of the firefighter role maps on the provision of first aid and other treatment to casualties by firefighters at operational incidents this aspect of the duties of a firefighter is apt to fall within the provisions of Regulation 13 of the EO 1975 (Health services). Accordingly, it would follow that this is a basis for seeking a standard DBS check for spent convictions and cautions.

1.16 However, Counsel also noted that enhanced checking may be available through interpretation of the role map the position would be stronger if affected via further legislation. The advice concluded that,

- In the light of the statutory powers under FRSA 2004 s 44 and in particular the relevant provisions of the firefighter role maps on the provision of first aid and other treatment to casualties by firefighters at operational incidents this aspect of the duties of a firefighter is, in my opinion, likely to fall within a regulated activity for the purposes of Schedule 4 of the 2006 Act under the “health care” definition. **Accordingly, it would follow that this is a basis for seeking an enhanced DBS check for spent convictions and cautions and police held information for firefighters who may provide such treatment or aid as part of their operational duties.**

1.17 Counsel concluded that in terms of the FRS Act 2004 and the Rehabilitation of Offenders Exceptions Order 1975 there was no category of exception identified that would apply to FRS non uniformed staff or staff who do not need to meet the requirements of the firefighter role maps to permit a standard DBS check for spent convictions to be undertaken in relation to such staff. Accordingly, it was advised that basic DBS checks could be carried out for those staff with only these staff groups who are in roles which specifically require a higher level of check eligible to receive them (for example because they work regularly with children). This

position has been superseded in practice by the legislative changes discussed at 1.8 above which would allow standard DBS checks for all employees.

- 1.18 As part of the national program of work for vetting in Fire Rescue Services, it has been confirmed by Legal Counsel that the Brigade are exempt under the Order of Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and support the delivery of enhanced level three background checks for Brigade staff.
- 2.1 The Brigade implements minimum standard DBS checks for all staff with three yearly checks with an annual administration cost of £50,700 or it's recommended that the Brigade moves straight to enhanced checks at an annual cost of £78,000. Current basic checks cost £23; each standard check costs £23.00 with Enhanced level three checks costing £40.00.
- 2.2 Prospective staff should continue to obtain their own checks, either at the standard level or it's recommended at enhanced level. This is contained within the budget for recruitment within People Services based on the maximum of two hundred and forty training units per year. These arrangements would see costs increase from a maximum of £6000 to £11,000 annually for reimbursement upon appointment. This is expected to be contained within existing budget envelopes.
- 2.3 To align DBS, higher background checks and security vetting and NFCC workstreams will transfer responsibility to OR&C. This will require the transfer of one FRSF post and two FRSC posts from People Services to OR&C. Following the transfer of the process for current Brigade staff from People Services to Operational Resilience, this report details the short-term resource vetting requirements and the longer-term strategy for ensuring that all Brigade staff hold background checks appropriate to their role with a dedicated vetting team to ensure vetting for all Brigade staff on a three-year rotation.
- 2.4 It is proposed that to commence processing the backlog of background checks for existing Brigade staff, an FRSC with experience in background checks and vetting is appointed with a two-year fixed term contract. This will deal with the current backlog of 2106 members of staff with no background checks. The expectation is this will be complete within eighteen months.
- 2.5 The newly formed vetting team within OR&C must work closely with the Data Protection Officer and be fully compliant with UK General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Data Processing Agreement (DPA). They will meet the additional demand to complete checks for all staff noted in paragraph 1.12 supported further by internal resource. However, the additional FRSC on a fixed term contract for two years with vetting experience will cost £46,709 annually with a total of £93,418.
- 2.6 An option for outsourcing enhanced vetting has been explored however this incurs considerable cost. This option would result in the cost rising to approximately £200 per application for basic vetting with a total approximate cost of £390,000 per year to the Brigade. Requirements for an external company to carry out LFB staff checks also require the Brigade to complete employee background forms which would result in an administration cost and process to be in place. Employees are required

to complete permission forms which if not submitted by employees within a specified timeframe, vetting charges would still apply and there would be no requirement for an external company to pursue Brigade staff to progress the application. In addition, due to GDPR considerations a private company would not be able to enforce vetting for our staff if they refuse to proceed with the vetting process. As a result it is not recommended as an option to outsource the vetting to an external supplier.

- 2.7 This lapse of background checks within Brigade for specific posts could pose a risk in terms of protective security and reputational damage. Our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) notes the importance of trust the Londoners require in the Brigade. Our review of culture, chaired by Nazir Afzal OBE highlighted poor behaviors and the need to gain the public trust. We have seen high profile cases in partner emergency services where criminal activity has not been picked up resulting in serving members of the emergency services conducting the most terrible of crimes whilst in service. This evidence highlights the importance to commence work immediately and the potential risk if we do not.
- 2.8 To support delivery further work is required to determine how Brigade manage current Brigade staff who do not pass the security vetting and legally if there is potential challenge to contractual employment in this instance prior to the retrospective vetting of Brigade staff who are currently in employment. Whilst Brigade contracts specify that individuals inform line management or People Services of any convictions whilst employed by the Brigade, there has been no instance of staff informing Brigade of any convictions. OR&C will create a task & finish group with the correct stakeholder engagement to create a case conference style review against individual cases when staff fail any vetting process. This will be created for agreement and implementation underpinned by the supporting governance and policy.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1 The LFC and the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience are required to have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) when taking decisions. This in broad terms involves understanding the potential impact of policy and decisions on different people, taking this into account and then evidencing how decisions were reached.
- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 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.
- 3.4 The Public Sector Equality Duty requires decision-takers in the exercise of all their functions, to have due regard to the need to:
 - eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct.

- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
 - foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 3.5 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:
- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic where those disadvantages are connected to that characteristic.
 - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.
 - encourage persons 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.
- 3.6 The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.
- 3.7 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, in particular, to the need to:
- tackle prejudice
 - promote understanding.
- 3.8 The contents of the EIA identified the existing Brigade employment contractual agreements with Brigade staff which details the requirement for notification of convictions prior and during employment. Further work is being undertaken to deliver policy and procedure to support the 3 year rotational enhanced security vetting process for all Brigade staff as detailed within the EIA. Consultation with General Counsel and Finance was undertaken with confirmation that in the light of the statutory powers under FRSA 2004 s 44 and in particular the relevant provisions of the firefighter role maps on the provision of first aid and other treatment to casualties by firefighters at operational incidents this aspect of the duties of a firefighter is likely to fall within a regulated activity for the purposes of Schedule 4 of the 2006 Act under the "health care" definition. Accordingly, it would follow that this is a basis for seeking an enhanced DBS check for spent convictions and cautions and police held information for firefighters who may provide such treatment or aid as part of their operational duties.

4 Other considerations

Workforce comments

- 4.1 This report is subject to ongoing discussions with the representative bodies. The essence of the report creating the vetting team has no impact on the exemption order but the move to enhanced background checks will impact on the workforce. The task & finish group recommendations will be subject to

Brigade Joint Committees and negotiations. This is added as agenda items of the relevant committees to commence early representative body engagement.

Sustainability comments

- 4.2 This report is not expected to have any direct sustainability implications

Procurement comments

- 4.3 This This report is not expected to have any direct procurement implications, however further work may have an in direct impact on the current outsourced disciplinary support delivered by CMP. Early discussion will take place to identify potential impact for action.

Communications comments

- 4.1 Following approval from the Commissioner the updated process and move to standard check or recommended enhanced background check must be communicated all staff. This will be the rationale for the change and any supporting process and policy change.

This must be completed prior to implementation to ensure staff are fully aware. It will also need to be added as an immediate requirement in the recruitment process for all prospective new staff.

Hotwire articles will need to be supplemented by manager briefings to staff.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1 This report recommends that enhanced DBS background checks are implemented for all LFB staff. This has an ongoing annual revenue cost of £78,000 from April 2024. Initial costs in financial years 2023-24 and 2024-25 will be higher as a result of processing a backlog of checks and the creation of a new post.
- 5.2 An additional FRS grade C post would also be required for a two-year period from July 2023, at an annual cost of £46,709 and a total two year cost of £93,418.
- 5.3 If enhanced DBS checks are agreed for all staff this would result in additional annual costs of £78,000 as set out below. £88,829 of this cost is in the 2023/24 financial year and will be funded via the budget flexibility reserve. Ongoing costs from 2023/24 will be factored into the financial medium term forecast.
- 5.4 The Budget Flexibility Reserve has a forecast balance of £15.3 million as at the end of the 2023/24 financial year, reflecting the revised 2022/23 outturn position (£24.8 million), budgeted drawdowns as per the 2023/24 Budget Report (£6.3 million), and further commitments of £750,000 made in DMFD199, £358,000 made in DMFD205 and £2,083,000 made in DMFD209.

	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 and all future years £
Enhanced DBS Checks	£42,120	£120,120	£78,000	£ 78,000
Additional FRSC	£46,709	£46,709		
Total	£88,829	£166,829	£78,000	£ 78,000

6. Legal comments

- 6.1 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.
- 6.2 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"). Paragraph (b) of Part 2 of the said direction requires the Commissioner to seek the prior approval of the Deputy Mayor before "[a] commitment to expenditure (capital or revenue) of £150,000 or above as identified in accordance with normal accounting practices...".
- 6.3 The Deputy Mayor's approval is accordingly required for the London Fire Commissioner to commit the unbudgeted expenditure set out in this report in respect of the additional DBS checks, additional staff costs and recruitment costs; these costs cumulatively exceed the £150,000 threshold.
- 6.4 Section 1 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 states that the Commissioner is the fire and rescue authority for Greater London.
- 6.5 The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2023 was laid before the Commons and the Lords recently as a 'draft affirmative' piece of legislation and will therefore require active approval by both Houses before being signed into law (this will mean a debate in both Houses).
- 6.6 Assuming the above legislation comes into force without further amendment it will have the following effect. It will amend the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 ("the 1975 Order"). The 1975 Order disapplies specified provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 ("the 1974 Act") which would otherwise prevent a person from having to disclose a spent conviction or caution and protect that person from being prejudiced by that conviction or caution or any failure to disclose it.
- 6.7 Article 2 of the new legislation will amend Schedule 1 to the 1975 Order by adding new paragraphs to Part 2 (offices, employment and work) to cover "Fire and rescue authority employees".
- 6.8 These amendments mean that a person's spent convictions and cautions may be taken into account when assessing a person's suitability to engage in such work.

- 6.9 Therefore, all fire and rescue authority employees will be eligible for Standard DBS checks as described in Appendix 1 to this report.
- 6.10 The legislation will not permit wider use of the enhanced level checks referenced in Appendix 1 to this report.
- 6.11 Advice has been received that aspects of the Firefighter role map may permit such checks on the basis that they provide first aid and other treatment to casualties at operational incidents as part of the duties of a firefighter.
- 6.12 The position set out in regard to enhanced checks has not been tested and it is possible that a challenge could be made to it.
- 6.13 It is recommended that if this report is progressed the working team continues to engage with General Counsel to ensure the aims of this report can be met.
- 6.14 Additionally, the information provided in any DBS check is likely to be highly sensitive and engage the UK's Data Protection legislation. It is further recommended that any process developed to collect, receive or otherwise process this information is discussed with the Data Protection Officer during its development and before commencement to ensure full compliance with the statutory regimes and requirements of the ICO.

List of appendices

Appendix	Title	Open or confidential*
1	Levels of Security Clearance Vetting	Open
2	EIA assessment	Open

Part two confidentiality

Only the facts or advice considered to be exempt from disclosure under the FOI Act should be in the separate Part Two form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a Part Two form: NO

Appendix 1

Levels of Security Vetting

There are four levels of DBS checks;

1. Basic

Basic disclosures provide details of unspent criminal convictions and cautions to individual applicants.

2. Standard

Standard DBS certificates contain details of all convictions and cautions on record (including spent convictions and cautions). Protected convictions and protected cautions are excluded from disclosure.

3. Enhanced

All enhanced DBS certificates contain details of the individual's spent and unspent convictions, spent and unspent cautions, police reprimands and warnings, any other relevant police information and in some cases, further information stored on statutory lists which contain details of people considered unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults.

4. Enhanced with barred list checks

This is an enhanced check however also includes a check of DBS barred lists. These lists include details of people deemed unsuitable to work with children or some groups of adults. The circumstances to which an enhanced check with list check apply are prescribed in the Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) Regulations 2009, SI 2009/1882.

5. Security Check

Individuals who required to have SC vetting are to be employed in posts which:

- require them to have long-term, frequent and uncontrolled access to SECRET assets and/or occasional, supervised access to TOP SECRET assets

And for individuals who:

- while not in such posts, will be in a position to directly or indirectly bring about the same degree of damage
- will have sufficient knowledge to obtain a comprehensive picture of a SECRET plan, policy or project
- are being considered for employment where it would not be possible to make reasonable career progress without security clearance for access to SECRET assets
- require access to certain levels of classified material originating from another country or international organisations

Checks are involved:

- successful completion of the Baseline Personnel Security Standard
- completion, by the individual, of a security questionnaire
- a departmental/company records check which will include, for example personal files, staff reports, sick leave returns and security records
- a check of both spent and unspent criminal records
- a check of credit and financial history with a credit reference agency
- a check of Security Service (MI5) records
- exceptionally, if there are any unresolved security concerns about the individual, or if recommended by the Security Service, the individual may also be interviewed
- in the event of any unresolved financial concerns, the individual may also be required to complete a separate financial questionnaire so that a full review of personal finances can be carried out
- checks may extend to third parties included on the security questionnaire.

6. Developed Vetting

It is Cabinet Office policy that a DV clearance must be formally reviewed after 7 years (3 years for non-List X contractors). The risk owner has the discretion to review a clearance at any time up to that point. They may adopt a policy of issuing shorter clearances to a particular category of employee (for example; armed forces reservists; sub-contractors) as mitigation for a lower level of day-to-day personnel security oversight and/or carry out an early review in individual cases where a specific risk has been identified.

Individuals who require DV are to be employed in posts which:

- require them to have frequent and uncontrolled access to TOP SECRET assets or require any access to TOP SECRET codeword material

And for individuals who:

- while not in such posts, will be in a position to directly or indirectly bring about the same degree of damage.
- require frequent and uncontrolled access to Category I nuclear material
- require access to certain levels of classified material originating from another country or international organisation.

What checks are involved:

- successful completion of the Baseline Personnel Security Standard
- completion, by the individual, of a DV security questionnaire
- a departmental/company records check which will include personal files, staff reports, sick leave returns and security records
- a check of both spent and unspent criminal records
- a check of credit and financial history with a credit reference agency
- a check of Security Service (MI5) records
- a full review of personal finances
- a detailed interview conducted by a trained Investigating Officer

- further enquiries, including interviews with referees conducted by a trained Investigating Officer
- checks may extend to third parties included on the security questionnaire
- the full review of personal finances will include an assessment of an individual's assets, liabilities, income and expenditure both on an individual basis and taking into account the joint position with a spouse or partner.

Appendix 2

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form

The **purpose** of an EIA is to give **as much information as possible** about potential equality impacts, to demonstrate we meet our **legal duties** under the Equality Act 2010.

Please read the EIA Guidance [on Hotwire](#) before completing this form.

Once you open the template please save it on your OneDrive or SharePoint site. Do not open the template, fill it in and then click Save as this will override the template on Hotwire.

NOTE – All boxes MUST be completed before the document will be reviewed.

1. What is the name of the policy, project, decision or activity?

Security Vetting Report

Overall Equality Impact of this policy, project, decision or activity (see instructions at end of EIA to complete):

High		Medium		Low	X
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2. Administration

Name of EIA author	Katie Devereux		
Have you attended an EIA Workshop	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Department and Team	Operational Resilience & Control		
Date EIA created by author	10 May 2023		
Date EIA signed off by Inclusion Team	Inclusion team confirmed submission of EIA to be in report 19.05.23		
Date Actions completed	TBC		
External publication	Are you happy for this EIA to be published externally?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/> If No state why:

3. Aim and Purpose

What is the aim and purpose of the policy, project, decision or activity?	The aim of the report is to provide recommendations to deliver the vetting requirements for all Brigade staff, detailing the legal requirement for current Brigade staff to have a form of security clearance in accordance with the rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1975 and the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (Exemptions) Order 1975. Recruitment have been carrying out DBS vetting on all new staff prior to this report.
Who is affected by this work (all staff, specific department, wider communities?)	All Brigade staff will be required to hold a form of security vetting in the form of DBS checks.
What other policies/documents are relevant to this EIA?	Documents LFC- 0032 Policy number 0736 – Safeguarding adults at risk Policy number 0556 – Induction policy

4. Equality considerations: the EIA must be based on evidence and information.

What consultation and engagement has taken place to support you to predict the equality impacts of this work?	<i>Discussions with senior management.</i>
Consultation must take place with ESGs (including RB ESGs), Learning Support and affected groups.	

5. Assessing Equality Impacts

Use this section to record the impact this policy, project, decision or activity might have on people who have characteristics which are protected by the Equality Act.

Protected Characteristic	Impact: positive, neutral or adverse	Reason for the impact	What information have you used to come to this conclusion?
<i>Example: Age</i>	<i>Adverse</i>	<i>Moving this service online will adversely affect older people, who are least likely to have access to a computer or smart phone and may not be able to use the new service.</i>	<i>GLA Datastore: X% of the London community are aged 70 or over. GLA data shows that only 10% of those over the age of 70 have regular access to a computer or smart phone.</i>
Age (younger, older or particular age group)	Neutral		<p>Staff: You may need to gather data on staff. Basic equalities data is available here (select the most recent data document)</p> <p>If you need specific data on a department, contact the HR People Management Information Team - pshrpm@london-fire.gov.uk – no less than five working days notice must be given for all data requests.</p> <p>Community/Public: you may need data from the GLA Datastore.</p>
Disability (physical, sensory, mental health, learning disability, long term illness, hidden)	Neutral	<i>Additional support may be required to assist staff with learning disabilities to complete the process of security clearance. This has been factored into the business case for resources</i>	<p>Staff: You may need to gather data on staff. Basic equalities data is available here (select the most recent data document)</p> <p>If you need specific data on a department, contact the HR PMI Team- pshrpm@london-fire.gov.uk – no less than five working days notice must be given for all data requests.</p>

			<p>You may need to contact the Learning Support Team, Disability Working Group or Neurodiversity Support Group for advice and data on accessibility.</p> <p>Community/Public: you may need data from the GLA Datastore.</p>
Gender reassignment (someone proposing to/undergoing/ undergone a transition from one gender to another)	Neutral	<p><i>Consider: is this activity or policy gender neutral, or does it use gendered language? Does it have any impact on privacy, or physical facilities such as stations, changing rooms or buildings? Does it require unnecessary information such as titles, that could be removed?</i></p> <p><i>All wording within security processes for vetting takes into account the gender reassignment and transitioning. All security forms required are owned by the Home Office.</i></p>	<p>Staff: You may need to gather data on staff. Basic equalities data is available here (select the most recent data document)</p> <p>If you need specific data on a department, contact the HR PMI Team- pshrpmil@london-fire.gov.uk – no less than five working days notice must be given for all data requests.</p> <p>You may need to contact the LGBT+ Staff Network or Stonewall for advice.</p> <p>Community/Public: you may need data from the GLA Datastore.</p>
Marriage / Civil Partnership (married as well as same-sex couples)	Neutral	<p><i>Consider: does this activity require information about people's marriage or civil partnership status?</i></p>	
Pregnancy and Maternity	Neutral	<p><i>Consider: does this activity, project or policy affect staff on maternity leave? How will they access this policy if they need to? Are pregnant people excluded from this activity?</i></p>	<p>You may need advice from the HR Helpdesk: IT.HR@london-fire.gov.uk</p> <p>You may need data from the GLA Datastore.</p>
Race (including nationality, colour, national and/or ethnic origins)	Neutral	<p><i>Consider: do you know the ethnicity of the staff or community members who will be affected by this, is it likely to affect one group more than others? E.g. there are a disproportionate number of BAME staff at junior grades at LFB, does this proposal affect junior staff more?</i></p>	<p>Staff: You may need to gather data on staff. Basic equalities data is available here (select the most recent data document)</p> <p>If you need specific data on a department, contact the HR PMI Team- pshrpmil@london-fire.gov.uk</p>

		<p><i>Does this policy or project require any information relevant to ethnicity, nationality or race?</i></p> <p><i>Does this policy/project/proposal affect anything where inequalities have been identified? E.g. COVID-19, low income professions, health or social inequality?</i></p>	<p>fire.gov.uk – no less than five working days notice must be given for all data requests.</p> <p>Community/Public: You may need data from the GLA Datastore.</p>
Religion or Belief (people of any religion, or no religion, or people who follow a particular belief (not political))	Neutral	<p><i>Consider: Could this proposal affect people of different religions? Does it affect things like uniform, appearance or facilities (consider religious headwear, prayer facilities, etc)?</i></p>	<p>You may need data from the GLA Datastore.</p>
Sex (men and women)	Neutral	<p><i>Consider: how might men and women be affected differently by your policy, project or proposal? Are there more men or more women who will be affected?</i></p>	<p>Staff: You may need to gather data on staff. Basic equalities data is available here (select the most recent data document)</p> <p>If you need specific data on a department, contact the HR PMI Team- pshrpml@london-fire.gov.uk – no less than five working days notice must be given for all data requests.</p> <p>Community/Public: You may need data from the GLA Datastore.</p>
Sexual Orientation (straight, bi, gay and lesbian people)	Neutral	<p><i>Consider: does this proposal, policy or project use any language that could be made gender neutral? Does it involve employees or communities disclosing any information about their family or living situation? What steps have been taken to ensure there is no impact on LGB people?</i></p>	<p>Staff: You may need to gather data on staff. Basic equalities data is available here (select the most recent data document)</p> <p>If you need specific data on a department, contact the HR PMI Team- pshrpml@london-fire.gov.uk – no less than five working days notice must be given for all data requests.</p> <p>You may need to contact the LGBT+ Staff Network or Stonewall for advice.</p> <p>Community/Public: you may need data from the GLA Datastore.</p>

6. Impacts outside the Equality Act 2010

What other groups might be affected by this policy, project, decision or activity?
Consider the impact on: carers, parents, non-binary people, people with learning difficulties, neurodiverse people, people with dyslexia, autism, care leavers, ex-offenders, people living in areas of disadvantage, homeless people, people on low income / in poverty.
The development of the security vetting processes will be in line with the Brigades guidance to ensure there is low impact on staff with learning difficulties

7. Legal duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty (s149 Equality Act 2010)	
How does this work help LFB to:	
Eliminate discrimination?	<i>This proposal as directed by Government will be applied to all LFB staff.</i>
Advance equality of opportunity between different groups?	<i>This proposal as directed by Government will be applied to all LFB staff.</i>
Foster good relations between different groups?	<i>This proposal as directed by Government will be applied to all LFB staff.</i>

8. Mitigating and justifying impacts		
Where an adverse impact has been identified, what steps are being taken to mitigate it? If you're unable to mitigate it, is it justified ?		
Characteristic with potential adverse impact (e.g. age, disability)	Action being taken to mitigate or justify	Lead person responsible for action

9. Follow up, actions and evaluation

Where the Inclusion Team or other stakeholders have recommended **actions** in order to demonstrate due regard, these must be recorded here and delivered in accordance with time scales. Additionally, what is the organisational learning in relation to this piece of work in regards to the Equality Act 2010.

Action recommended and person responsible for delivery	Target date Action to be completed by	Date action completed
Lessons learnt and evaluation		
Free text		

Now complete the RAG rating at the top of page 1:

High: as a result of this EIA there is evidence of significant adverse impact. This activity should be stopped until further work is done to mitigate the impact.

Medium: as a result of this EIA there is potential adverse impact against one or more groups. The risk of impact may be removed or reduced by implementing the actions identified in box 8 above.

Low: as a result of this EIA there are no adverse impacts predicted. No further actions are recommended at this stage.

Document Control

Signed (lead for EIA / action plan)	Confirmation of EIA submitted to inclusion team	Date	14 May 2023
Sign off by Inclusion Team	Pending confirmation however inclusion team content for EIA to be included in the report.	Date	
Stored by			
Links			
External publication	Are you happy for this EIA to be published externally?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/> If No state why: