

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

[REDACTED]
(By email)

Our Ref: MGLA040121-2861

29 January 2021

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request for information which the Greater London Authority (GLA) received on 2 January 2021. Your request has been considered under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

You requested:

I request the following information regarding the fireworks and light show in London on New Years Eve 2020/21.

The full cost of the event.

Who authorised the event.

Was there a committee and if so who was part of this.

Who decided on the content of the display.

What company provide the display and who authorised them.

What date was this event agreed.

What compound did the fireworks contain.

Where were the fireworks transported from and by what mode of transport.

Our response to your request is as follows:

The GLA received a number of requests for information following the New Year's Eve show. Our responses have been collated in the attached document.

If you have any further questions relating to this matter, please contact me, quoting the reference MGLA040121-2861.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]
Information Governance Officer

If you are unhappy with the way the GLA has handled your request, you may complain using the GLA's FOI complaints and internal review procedure, available at:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/governance-and-spending/sharing-our-information/freedom-information>

NYE 2020

On New Year's Eve 2020, London welcomed in 2021 with a unique fireworks, lighting and drone show broadcast live on BBC One.

The special broadcast event was organised by the Mayor of London in place of the annual public fireworks display, which could not take place due to the impact of the Covid-19 restrictions.

2020 was one of the most challenging years in living memory for both our city and the country. The unique 10-minute show at midnight paid tribute to the NHS, who continue to work tirelessly to save lives, and heroes like Captain Sir Tom Moore, who lifted our spirits and helped raise millions of pounds for the NHS. It recognised the importance and impact of the Black Lives Matter movement on millions of people's lives. The show also looked forward in hope to the new year, concluding with a message from Sir David Attenborough.

The show was watched by a record number of people across the country and world.

Costs

The total budget for the New Year's Eve show was £1.5m. This was funded through the GLA events budget and was substantially less than in previous years. The final costs are not yet held – they are still being calculated and will be within the allocated budget.

Further breakdown of this budget amount is not available because a) the final itemised spend is still being fully reconciled; and b) release of the detailed costs would unduly jeopardise a fair and competitive procurement process being planned for future events.

Show theme

2020 was one of the toughest years in living memory for Londoners and people across the country. Throughout such a difficult period Londoners have stood together and supported one another. The creative theme of the show reflected what happened this year and the spirit that kept Londoners going. These moments included the fundraising efforts of Captain Sir Tom Moore, the public support for the NHS in its efforts to fight Covid-19, the importance and impact of the Black Lives Matter movement for racial equity, and the culmination of the UK's withdrawal from the EU.

Sections within the drone display were designed to show recognisable images which best represented some of these themes. This included the NHS logo, an image of Captain Sir Tom Moore waving, a nightingale for the Nightingale Hospital, and also raised fists, a long-recognised symbol of solidarity and support which was prevalent across the city this year as London once again proudly stood united against racism.

The Mayor gave final approval for the show during December.

The event was produced on behalf of the Mayor of London and the GLA by Jack Morton Worldwide. Companies involved in delivering the core creative elements of the show were On the Sly, Titanium Fireworks, Durham Marengi Lighting, Signify and SKYMAGIC

Fireworks

The fireworks used in the display were on a much lower scale to those used in previous New Year's Eve events. Environmental assessment of the fireworks identified that the combustion by-products of the display (NO_x, CO, CO₂, and SO₂) were reduced to 31% of those created by the previous New Year's Eve display. These calculations are attached.

The GLA does not hold information about how the fireworks were transported, or from where.

London NYE - environmental calculations

These calculations have been carried out by CarnDu Ltd and reflect current industry good practice and information provided by firework manufacturers and equipment suppliers



Display description			Combustion byproducts (kg) (Note 1)				Carbon offsets or equivalences (CO/CO2)			Pollution equivalences (NOx/SO2)
	Description	NEC	NOx	CO/CO2	SO2	Solids (Note 2)	Trees planted	Car (km)	Generator (Note 3)	Car (km)
2020	Single Barge on River Thames	318.0	5.72	74.41	1.27	251.38				
	Wembley Arch Rainbow	46.0	0.83	10.76	0.18	36.36				
	Tower Bridge inc. Waterfall	77.0	1.4	18.02	0.31	60.87				
	TOTAL	441.0	7.95	103.19	1.76	348.61	0.4	813	158	35933
2019	London Eye plus 3 x barges (10 minutes)	1390.0	25.02	325.26	5.56	1098	1.2	2561	500	113260

NOTES:

- 1 Does not include non polluting gasses such as N₂
- 2 This only includes aerial, non water-soluble, solids (eg Al₂O₃,
- 3 The number of minutes a 60kVA generator needs to run to be equivalent

Overall the 2020 display was approximately 31% the scale of the 2019 display and contributed 31% of the combustion by-products