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Home Office

Home Secretary

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08 AUG 17

Sadiq Khan  
Mayor of London  
City Hall  
London  
SE1 2AA

Aug 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017

Dear Sadiq,

Thank you for your letter of 12 July in which you raise a number of concerns about the resources available to the London Fire Brigade (LFB) to respond to major incidents in the Capital.

The tragic events at Grenfell Tower which took place within weeks of the terror-related attacks at London Bridge and Finsbury Park, as well as Manchester Arena, have shocked us all. First and foremost our thoughts are with the victims, families and friends who were affected by these terrible incidents and the Government stands ready to help in any way possible to ensure all victims' needs are met.

I am extremely grateful to the emergency services who responded to these incidents and I place great value on the vital role they continue to play in keeping our communities safe. As you are aware, in respect of the Grenfell Tower fire, the Government is committed to meeting the needs of those who responded to the incident and endured incredibly difficult scenes as well as those who are working with the bereaved. The Prime Minister attended the site of the disaster in person to meet emergency service and support workers at the earliest opportunity, to ensure that they had the resources and support needed to undertake their work after tackling the fire.

You ask for an increase in grant funding to the Greater London Authority (GLA) towards LFB resources in light of the impact of the recent tragic events on emergency service demand. However, the amount of funding provided to LFB for undertaking fire and rescue services across the Capital is, of course, a matter for you as the Mayor of London in conjunction with the London Fire Commissioner and the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority. The GLA is responsible for making decisions on how resource funding (from central government grant, locally retained business rates, and council tax) is allocated to the services that they provide, including fire and rescue. Core spending for the GLA has already increased by 2.1

percent in year 2017-18, and will rise by another 7.1 percent in cash terms by 2020. Over the last 5 years, GLA's unringfenced reserves increased by £1.3bn.

I trust that you will ensure LFB continue to have the resources they need for firefighters to carry out their vital work.

The Lord Harris Review concluded that London's levels of preparedness for tackling Marauding Terrorist Firearms Attacks (MTFA) are good, and better than they ever have been, and the right response would be delivered in the event of an attack. Whilst this year's attacks in London and Manchester highlight the continuing threat we face from terrorism, our emergency services' response to each of these terrible events was fast and effective. LFB have a full capability to respond to terrorist incidents with trained personnel who can operate in higher risk environments.

Nevertheless, the Home Office is uplifting the specialist MTFA Fire and Rescue Service capability across the country to enable a faster and even more effective response, including in LFB. London is seeing an increase in Home Office funding to double the current capability. As part of our £144m investment in armed policing, there will also be an additional 1,000 armed officers by the end of 2018. The first phase of the armed uplift is already complete, with an extra 41 Armed Response Vehicles and around 650 armed officers. The next phase - an increase in Counter Terrorism Specialist Firearms Officers - is expected to complete in 2018. The number of armed response vehicles has more than doubled in London and around a quarter of the national Counter Terrorism Specialist Firearms Officers capability will also be based in the capital.

Public safety is paramount for this Government, which is why we are increasing investment in our emergency response. It is however the responsibility of each fire and rescue authority to manage their resources including staff across prevention, protection and operational response to local risks.

On the issue of firefighters' pay, the Government has no role in the pay negotiation process. It is the responsibility of the National Joint Council to consider what pay award is appropriate taking into account views of all 45 fire and rescue authorities in England. I understand that negotiations are ongoing.

With best wishes,



Rt Hon Amber Rudd MP