

The Notre Dame Inferno: How Potential Causes were Addressed

by Robert Harris



As the burning of Notre Dame Cathedral unfolded yesterday evening, many, no doubt, will have speculated upon the causes of the tragedy, given the considerable significance of this landmark structure within European and Christian civilisation.

Local news sources [unwilling to entertain the speculations](#) of one French interviewee that tried to note some of the above surrounding circumstances.

Prima facie, it might have also been thought that it was peculiar that such a serious fire became so advanced during a time of day when the cathedral would have been in use by public visitors. There have been numerous serious fires during

periods of restoration, as the mainstream media rightly noted, but less mentioned was the likely fact that such work would have ceased some hours before smoke became visible.

Although it is notable that this morning has brought news reports that some of the fire-fighters displayed exceptional bravery to overcome the height-access limitations of their equipment, witness testimony indicates that a very slow initial response from the fire services allowed the fire to take hold.

The *Daily Telegraph*, for example, carried [this early report](#):

Javier Chavez , a visitor, was inside the cathedral when the fire started.

He said: "They took everyone out. We were very very scared and very sad. Thousands of people were crying."

Mr Chavez added that it took the fire brigade "at least half an hour" to reach the scene.

However, surprise would continue to be expressed about the speed of the fire's sheer destructiveness. The speed of the advance was