

PPE: Operational duty wear shorts Work instruction

General

Duty wear is the base layer of a firefighter's personal protective equipment. Duty wear is also the FRNSW uniform most often seen by the public and helps generate respect for the organisation. Smart duty wear:

- identifies firefighters as members of FRNSW
- reflects credit on the individual and the organisation.

This work instruction details the procedure in relation to operational duty wear shorts during their period of trial and will be dynamically amended based on trial feedback.

This work instruction should be read in conjunction with [Recommended practice, PPE: Duty wear shirts and trousers](#).

Operational duty wear shorts

Operational duty wear shorts provide basic mechanical, thermal and sun protection (50+ UPF in compliance with AS/NZS 4399:1996). The shorts are designed as general work wear that is comfortable, with stretch fabric for improved movement and durability. The shorts are available in female and male cuts.

RFID

The operational duty wear shorts feature RFID tracking so that shorts can be returned to firefighters.

The RFID is allocated to the firefighter on issue of the shorts, for the duration of the trial. For this reason, shorts must not be swapped between firefighters. If the shorts allocated to you don't fit, contact [Equipment Logistics](#).

Specifications

Material: 98% cotton Ripstop, 2% elastane 270 gsm

- Sizes:
- Female: waist: 06 through to 18.
 - Male: waist: 67R through to 127R cm.

NOTE: Sizes available on ESCAT may be subject to change. Always refer to ESCAT.

Operations

Operational duty wear shorts may only be worn at the discretion of the Incident Commander or Station Commander, subject to consideration of operational demands and dynamic risk assessment.

At station

Operational duty wear shorts may be worn, at the discretion of the Station Commander. At the station, firefighters must wear a minimum of:

- shirt (comprising either a short- or long-sleeved duty wear shirt, or T-shirt)

- belt
- pants (either operational duty wear shorts, duty wear trousers, or modesty shorts)
- black operational firefighting crew socks
- approved footwear.

Away from station

Operational duty wear shorts may be worn, at the discretion of the Station Commander. Away from the station, when a higher level of PPE isn't required, firefighters must wear a minimum of:

- duty wear shirt (either a short- or long-sleeved duty wear shirt)
- belt
- pants (either operational duty wear shorts or duty wear trousers)
- black operational firefighting crew socks
- black structural firefighting boots.

Away from station, the operational duty wear shorts cannot be worn with the T-shirt unless worn in combination with the T-shirt as undergarments to Level 1 PPE.

When wearing operational duty wear shorts, firefighters must always ensure a pair of duty wear trousers is readily available to be donned when structural trousers are removed, with noted exceptions while recycling or in rehabilitation.

When to wear operational duty wear shorts

The summaries below give a basic indication of when to wear operational duty wear shorts. For more information, including how to wear duty wear with other forms of personal protective equipment and definitions of levels of PPE, refer to [Recommended practice, Personal protective clothing, equipment and uniform](#).

Only FRNSW issued operational duty wear shorts may be worn while on-duty.

Operational duty wear shorts must not be worn where lower leg protection is required, such as extended periods working in sunlight, and rescue and chainsaw operations.

- Level 1 PPE: Either duty wear trousers, operational duty wear shorts, or modesty shorts must be worn underneath structural firefighting clothing.
- Level 2 and Level 3 PPE: For bush firefighting operations, operational duty wear shorts must only be worn underneath structural firefighting trousers. For all other operations, operational duty wear shorts cannot be worn as a substitute for duty wear trousers.
- Level 4 PPE: Operational duty wear shorts may be worn as a substitute for duty wear trousers at the discretion of the Incident Commander or Station Commander only where the support provided is not in proximity to direct incident operations eg, sandbagging, delivery of equipment.
- Level A, B and C hazmat PPE: Operational duty wear shorts cannot be worn as a substitute for duty wear trousers underneath chemical protective clothing.
- Safe working on roads and attendance at MVA: Operational duty wear shorts must not be worn, unless worn underneath structural trousers.
- At station and while conducting station duties including SIMS checks, conducting hydrant inspections,¹ during community engagement, and during recovery operations: Operational duty wear shorts may be worn, at the discretion of the Station Commander.

¹ Please be aware of working on roadways requirements for inspecting hydrants located on roadways.

| | Fire, rescue, general duties | | | | | | | Hazmat | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|----------------|---|-------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Level: | Level 1 | | Level 2 | | Level 3 | Level 4 | | Level A | Level B | Level C |
| Minimum requirement for: | Structural firefighting – internal or offensive | Structural firefighting – external or defensive | Bushfire fighting | Operating hydraulic cutters & spreaders | General rescue | Station work, brigade exercises & PIPs, IMTs, Cold Zone, rehabilitation | Physical training | Pooled liquid, vapour and gas hazards | Splash hazards (with SCBA) | Splash hazards (with P2) |
| T-shirt | ● | ● | ● | | | ○ | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Duty wear shirt | ○ | ○ | ○ | ● | ● | ● | | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Operational duty wear shorts (trial) | As directed | As directed | As directed, only under structural trousers | | | As directed | | | | |
| Modesty shorts | ● | ● | | | | (rehab only) | ● | | | |
| Duty wear trousers | Recommended | Recommended | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| Baseball cap or sunhat | | | | | | ○ | ○ | | | |
| Dress boot | | | | | | ○ | | | | |
| Firefighting boot | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | | | |
| Structural coat | ● | ○ | | | | | | | | |
| Structural trousers | ● | ● | ○ | | | | | | | |
| Protective hood | ● | ● | ○ | | | | | | | |
| Structural helmet | ● | ● | | ● | ○ | | | | | |
| Structural glove | ● | ● | ● | | | | | | | |
| Multi-purpose jacket | | ● | ● | ○ | ○ | | | | | |
| Multi-purpose helmet | | | ● | | ● | | | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| GP glove | | | | ● | ● | | | | | |
| Safety glasses | | | | ● | ○ | | | | | |
| Goggles | | | ○ | ○ | ○ | | | | | ● |
| Hearing protection | | | | ● | ○ | | | | | |
| Splash suit, chemical gloves and boots | | | | | | | | | ● | ● |
| FE Suit | | | | | | | | ● | | |
| P2 particle mask | | | ○ | ○ | ○ | | | | | ● |
| SCBA | ● | | ○ | | ○ | | | ● | ● | |

Assess the risks and don the level of PPE required by the hazard.

Key: Minimum requirement ● As required ○

Maintenance

After use

Follow all procedures for decontamination and bagging and tagging clothing. If the clothing remains contaminated, change into clean clothing as soon as possible. Send contaminated clothing to laundry.

Always launder clothing according to the instructions on the clothing care tag.

Inspection

Inspect operational duty wear shorts:

- after use (or on return from the laundry if contaminated)
- regularly according to [SIMS worksheet, Personal protective equipment – Firefighting and duty wear](#) using the same inspection procedure as applies to the multi-purpose jacket, duty wear shirt and trousers
- for repairs or defects identified during the duration of the trial, contact [Equipment Logistics](#).

Stowing

As soon as possible after its return from laundry, retrieve your duty wear and stow as appropriate to avoid cluttering the station's laundry facilities.

Trial

The trial of operational duty wear shorts is managed by Equipment Logistics.

For the duration of the trial, operational duty wear shorts may only be worn by firefighters from specific stations selected as trial participants. The scope of the trial covers permanent and retained firefighters including Station Commanders. Stations have been selected based on climate (including humidity and temperature), diversity in weather patterns, or consistent usage under Level 1 PPE.

Trial feedback must be provided by trial participants once per shift set (permanent) or once per fortnight (retained).

All pairs of operational duty wear shorts must be returned to Equipment Logistics on conclusion of the trial.

Contact

For information on when and how to wear operational duty wear shorts, contact Manager Equipment Logistics on (02) 9742 7174 (Pabx 7174) or Equipment Help Desk on (02) 9742 7555 (Pabx 7555) or EquipmentLogistics@fire.nsw.gov.au.