



**United Firefighters Union of Aust -
New PPC – DON & DOFF**

Start of Transcript

The new PPC takes our personal protective clothing to a whole new level. It incorporates the latest in research and technology and is designed to improve the safety of fire-fighters in a wide range of hazardous situations.

New PPC - Don & Doff

The new PPC is designed for structural fire fighting, rescues and vehicle fires, aircraft and ship fires, and fire duties.

At EMR calls fire-fighters may choose to wear either the new station wear trousers or structural trousers. However, shorts must not be worn to EMR calls, unless they are under your structural trousers.

New Level 1 trousers and the wild land coat are provided for use at grass fires and wild fires. Alternatively fire-fighters may wear the new structural trousers in combination with the wild land coat. Rescue operators may use the new structural garments for road rescue in inclement weather. Or may choose to wear the fire rated level 1 overalls in warmer weather. The new PPC includes shorts, trousers, turn out boots, removable braces, flash hood, the coat, gloves and a helmet.

Ideally shorts should be worn under the trousers to reduce metabolic heat build up. You can choose from cargo style station wear shorts or light weight level 1 station trousers.

So how have we improved on the old PPC? Well, one of the main features is that both the coat and trousers are made from a fire rated fabric. This fabric has two distinct layers, an outer shell and a liner. The outer shell is made of PPI Gold. This shell is flame resistant and self extinguishing. It chars instead of melting or combusting when exposed to fire. The liner is made of gore-tex airlock. This combines a thermal moisture barrier with a nomex comfort material. It breathes, allowing perspiration and heat to escape, whilst preventing water and foam from passing through.

The new gore-tex airlock membrane is fitted with silicon spacers that create and insulating air cushion between the liner and the outer shell. This gives a

high level of thermal protection in a lighter garment. The outer shell and liner working in combination together provide the level of protection required for structural fire fighting.

There are many other improvements to the fire fighting garments; name and rank ID, padded shoulders and knees, cuffs designed to keep out water and embers, radio and torch storage, and hanging loops.

Remember it is crucial that you don't use the outer shell without the liner. The two go hand in hand. Both the coat and trousers have a liner out indicator. When the coat liner is removed and orange reflective back panel is revealed. And, when the trouser liner is removed the braces can't be attached.

Change of shift checks

First up there are a few important things to remember during your change of shift checks. These are basically just a matter of common sense.

Check the coats liner and the outer shell are secured together at the torso, neck and wrist. Also, carefully check the trousers and ensure all closures are fully fastened at the waist and ankles and that all zips are fully secured.

Regular inspection of your PPC is the key to ensuring your protection. You should carry a spare pair of shorts or level 1 trousers.

Now it's time to set up your PPC at your appliance. In the past you may have done this in the transition zone, however, we now believe that it is more efficient to have your gear ready to turn out in the cabin. This method saves valuable seconds when turning out.

The helmet should be stored safely in the holder provided.

Always ensure that your personal bag is placed onto the appliance at the start of each shift.

Donning

Now here are the steps to follow, in order, when turning out.

Ideally trousers should be stored over the turn out boots. Place your feet into

the boots and pull up the trousers. If you're using GP boots, don't put the trousers on over your shoes or boots. This can damage the inner liner and moisture barrier and can transfer contaminants from your boots onto your trousers.

Put the flesh hood on, smooth down the bib at the front and the back. Don the coat, but leave the zipper open to prevent unnecessary heat build up. Now slip off the flash hood and you're ready to roll.

Once on scene, zip up your coat, then don the BA and the face mask in the normal way. Pull the flash hood back up over your head. Make sure the opening fits around the rim of the mask. Open the helmet adjustment to accommodate the flash hood and BA mask. Don the helmet, adjust the chin strap and tighten until comfortable. Next put on your gloves. Make sure that the coat sleeves overlap the gloves.

Now that you're fully dressed, it's a good idea to get a buddy to make a quick inspection. They should pay particular attention to the parts you can't easily see yourself. Get them to check your back to make sure the hem is not caught in the BA's straps. Also they should check that all closures are secured properly.

Doffing

Doffing can start once you are safely out of the hot zone.

To begin with remove your gloves. Next open the coat to ventilate your body as soon as possible. Remove your helmet. Slip off the flash hood. Let it rest on the top of your collar. Remove your BA mask, then take off the BA. Now you can remove your coat. Put two hands under the inside of the flash hood. Gently lift it off in an upward motion to avoid any contact with the skin.

Remember, you need to drink plenty of fluids. Water is available on every appliance. Aqualite can also be added to water bottles for prolonged jobs. Officers should always consider utilising the additional appliance for hydration and rehabilitation whenever BA stage 1 is in operation.

Remove any soiled PPC and place into the oasis space tubs. Clean footwear prior to climbing into the cabin of the appliance. Utilise clean and dry garments from your personal bag or the disposable overalls carried on the

appliance.

When you get back, remove any soiled PPC and put it in for cleaning.

Remember, dirty gear is a hazard to you and your workmates. Clean your gear regularly and don't hang it back in cages or on hooks when it is dirty.

If you return from a call and your gear isn't contaminated you can doff and set up your PPC right at the truck. Remove your trousers while keeping the top boots in place. As you can see this should be done carefully. Step out of the boots and place them into the cabin. Now put on your station shoes; these can be stored either in the cab or by the appliance.

If you do have soiled PPC, remove it from the oasis tub. Remember this is a two person lift. Carefully remove the tub and place it on the ground. Remove your soiled gear from the tub and place it into the dry cleaning bag. Then get a fresh set of PPC and set it up in the truck. Now you're ready to roll again.

For more details about donning and doffing, as well as caring for and cleaning your PPC, check out TNE's training manual and intranet site.

This new generation PPC meets stringent Australian standards for safety and performance on the fire ground. If you look after your PPC and wear it correctly it will deliver both improved protection and peace of mind.

END OF TRANSCRIPT