

PHYSICAL ABILITIES ASSESSMENT - FIREFIGHTING TASK COURSE

Firefighting requires considerable physical abilities. The Physical Abilities Assessment (Firefighting Task Course) is designed to test an applicant's ability to perform basic strenuous tasks that firefighters must perform. The assessment involves a series of tasks, which are simulations of actual tasks performed on the job. These tasks must be completed consecutively.

The following abilities are assessed in this assessment:

1. Anaerobic capacity and agility.
2. Work in enclosed space.
3. Work at height.
4. Physical strength, endurance and co-ordination.

Each attribute is a vital component of firefighting. You will need to successfully complete each task.

Instructions for each task will be given to each applicant prior to commencement of the tasks and during the Familiarisation Day sessions. **You will not be provided with detailed instruction during the assessment.** You will be provided with firefighting tunic, gloves, breathing apparatus and safety helmet, but will need to bring your own sturdy footwear (i.e. Blundstone boots).

1. ROAD CRASH RESCUE

Purpose of the Test

The purpose of this task is to test upper body strength and to perform tasks using rescue equipment relative to road crash rescue.

Assessment Process

Wearing structural personal protective clothing without breathing apparatus, the applicant will perform three tasks in specified times by placing and holding the tool in a specified area.

The entire assessment will comprise the following tasks:

- Pick up tool and hold for 15 seconds without resting it against your body.
- Position and hold in a static pose against a vehicle in first specified area for 20 seconds.
- Back to hold position (starting position) for 15 seconds.
- Position and hold in a static pose against a vehicle in second specified area for 20 seconds.
- Back to hold position (starting position) for 15 seconds.
- Position and hold in a static pose against a vehicle in third specified area for 20 seconds.
- Place tool on the ground. The total time will be 1 minute 45 seconds.

Warnings and Disqualifications

A warning will result if applicant:

- Does not maintain tool contact on the vehicle for the allotted time (one warning per task).
- Rests tool against any part of their body during any of the three tasks.

A second offence for any task, the inability to complete any of the tasks or dropping the tool on the ground will result in disqualification.

Success Criteria

Applicants must complete the three tasks within the allotted time and place the tool back on the ground in the time of 1 minute 45 seconds to be successful.

[▶ Watch Road Crash Rescue Video](#)

2. CONFINED SPACES

Purpose of the Test

This task is designed to test the applicant's ability to work in a confined, darkened environment and to identify if, while wearing a facemask, the confined space restricts their capacity to do this.

Assessment Process

During this task you are to wear structural personal protective clothing and a breathing apparatus with full face mask. The facemask will not be connected to the breathing apparatus and you will be able to breathe normally. You will need to listen and follow the instructions given to you by the assessor.

You will move and crawl through a darkened area using a rope guideline for direction. An assessor will be with you at all times monitoring your performance and asking questions you must answer. **You must not remove the facemask until indicated by the assessor.**

If you feel you cannot continue, you are to stop and inform the assessor. You will be assisted from the darkened area and deemed to have not successfully completed this task.

Warnings and Disqualifications

Disqualification will result if you remove the facemask, cannot follow the assessor's instructions or fail to complete the task.

Success Criteria

Applicants who follow all instructions in the darkened area, do not remove the facemask during the task and reach the end of the confined space will have successfully completed this task.

[▶ Watch Confined Spaces Video](#)

3. AGILITY ASSESSMENT

Purpose of the Test

This test is designed to simulate the requirement to rapidly move items of firefighting equipment safely at an incident. It assesses anaerobic capacity and agility.

Assessment Process

The Agility Assessment consists of a series of four shuttles where participants wearing structural personal protective clothing without breathing apparatus are required to retrieve pieces of equipment on a marked track. From the start line, applicants are to move quickly to the 5 metre line, retrieve a coil of hose and move quickly back to the start line. Applicants must place the equipment on the ground and continue by retrieving the standpipe at the 10 metre line, a branch at the 15 metre line and a hose key at the 20 metre line.

Warnings and Disqualifications

Applicants will be given one warning if they stumble without touching the ground with their hand. A second offence will result in disqualification. Throwing any item of equipment or falling over will result in immediate disqualification.

Success Criteria

Applicants must complete the entire task within 47 seconds and not receive more than one warning.

[▶ Watch Agility Assessment Video](#)

4. TOWER/LADDER CLIMB AND CONTAINER HAUL

Purpose of the Test

The Tower/Ladder Climb tests your ability to climb heights and is also used to identify whether you will be able to work at heights. This test is designed to simulate the critical tasks of climbing stairs/ladders and hauling equipment up several floors through a vertical distance. It tests your aerobic capacity, lower body muscular endurance and upper body muscular strength and endurance.

Assessment Process

Wearing structural personal protective clothing with breathing apparatus, a safety harness and line will be fitted to applicants ascending the ladder. Applicants will be required to climb the ladder to a 15m platform and climb onto the tower platform. When climbing, applicants must grasp the ladder rungs, not the side rails, and concentrate on placement of hands and feet. Applicants are to move smoothly, safely and continuously. Once on the platform, applicants will then haul a 15kg weight (plastic drum containing 15 litres of water) for a distance of 8 metres, lift it over the rail and lower it 1m onto the platform floor. A hand-over-hand method will be used to lift the weight. Applicants will then go to the side of the tower, lean over and read two symbols held below and state what they are before descending the ladder to the ground.

Warnings and Disqualifications

Applicants will be given a warning if their feet slip off the rungs or lose control of the container. If either occurs a second time the applicant will be disqualified.

Applicants will be immediately disqualified if they:

- Don't grasp the rungs when climbing or descending.
- Don't follow the supervisor's instructions during the task.
- Don't use the hand-over-hand lifting method.
- Don't lift the container over the rail and place it on the platform.
- Don't look down, read and callout the symbols.
- Can't proceed (freeze) or fall off the ladder.

Success Criteria

The applicant will have successfully completed the test by climbing the ladder, hauling the container and identifying the symbols within 96 seconds without receiving more than one warning.

[▶ Watch Tower/Ladder Climb and Container Haul Video](#)

5. HOSE DRAG

Purpose of the Test

This test is designed to simulate the task of dragging out a 25mm hose line. It tests muscular strength and endurance of the arms and legs.

Assessment Process

Wearing structural personal protective clothing without breathing apparatus, applicants will grasp the end of a 25mm fire hose full of water which has been placed on the ground and drag it up an incline with a slope of 5° for a distance of 30 metres to a marked point (also the eventual finishing line). Applicants will return to the start line, pick up the hose where it crosses the start line and, holding it in two hands behind the back, drag it up the incline for a distance of 30 metres to the same marked point. Applicants will then return to the start line for a final time, pick up the hose where it crosses the start line and, holding it in two hands behind the back, drag it up the incline for a distance of 30 metres and place it on the finish line. By the time this task is completed, the applicant will have moved a total of 90 metres of hose.

The assessment is to be completed at a **brisk walking pace**. If you run you will be issued with a warning. The time limit is **1 minute, 25 seconds**.

Warnings and Disqualifications

Applicants will be given a warning if they stumble without their hand(s) touching the ground and will be disqualified if they receive a second warning or if they:

- Completely stop i.e. cannot continue dragging the hose.
- Run during any stage of the assessment.
- Drop the hose.
- Fall over.

Success Criteria

Applicants will have to complete the test in 1 minute and 25 seconds and receive no more than one warning.

[▶ Watch Hose Drag Video](#)

6. FIREFIGHTER RESCUE

Purpose of the Test

This test is designed to simulate the critical task of rescuing an injured firefighter from a fire scene. It tests the applicant's anaerobic and aerobic capacity and muscular strength and endurance in the legs, back and arms.

Assessment Process

You are required to hold the 90kg rescue dummy/mannequin by straps attached to a harness or under the arms. You will then be required to drag the dummy around the marked course and back, a distance of 30 metres. This task will be conducted on a carpeted, flat surface.

You will be able to pause during this task in order to readjust your grip or compose yourself, however you cannot let go of the dummy, and the timing of the task won't be suspended or halted.

Once you have completed this task, the dummy can be placed on the ground.

Warnings and Disqualifications

When dragging the dummy in a direct line to and from each mark, the applicant and the dummy must stay on the mat. If the applicant or the dummy go outside the mat the applicant will be given a warning, except if this happens on the turn.

One warning will be given if the applicant does something which may cause injury to themselves or the casualty e.g. drag the dummy by the head or a limb.

Applicants will be disqualified if they let go of the dummy or fail to complete the task within the prescribed time limit.

Success Criteria

The successful applicant will have completed the task within 49 seconds and received no more than one warning.

[▶ Watch Firefighter Rescue Video](#)