

# NEW SOUTH WALES FIRE BRIGADES OPERATIONS BULLETIN 2005/4



## Personal Protective Equipment—Correct wearing of gloves

This Operations Bulletin describes the various types of gloves issued by the NSWFB for use by operational personnel.

**Statistical data from the Health Services Branch has shown that many firefighter hand injuries can be prevented by using correct gloves at an incident or training exercise.**

Operational personnel are reminded of their responsibilities under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000*, specifically *Clause 20 Duties of employees*:

*(1) An employee must, while at work, take reasonable care for the health and safety of people who are at the employee's place of work and who may be affected by the employee's acts or omissions at work.*

*(2) An employee must, while at work, co-operate with his or her employer or other person so far as is necessary to enable compliance with any requirement under this Act or the regulations that is imposed in the interests of health, safety and welfare on the employer or any other person.*

### Firefighting Gloves

Firefighting (FF) gloves are designed to provide high level protection from fire, radiant heat and the handling of hot objects.



FF gloves must be worn at all fires unless there is an electrical, chemical or corrosive hazard which requires another type of glove.

**NOTE! FF gloves are not intended to protect against electrical, chemical or corrosive hazards.**

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### General Purpose Gloves

General purpose (GP) gloves are designed to prevent common hand injuries such as abrasions and cuts. GP gloves are not designed for use in firefighting operations and should be worn where manual handling or other tasks may cause laceration or injury to unprotected hands.



GP gloves are to be worn with disposable rubber gloves during rescue operations or incidents where the removal/handling of casualties is necessary.

**NOTE! If it is necessary to remove the outer GP glove(s) to ease hand movement when operating equipment or handling casualties, disposable gloves must be left on both hands. Once the task is completed the GP glove must again be worn to maximise firefighter safety.**

### Riggers Gloves

The riggers gloves are designed for use during cordage operations and training exercises.



Riggers gloves must also be worn by worn by Community Fire Unit members during training, firefighting operations and hazard reduction programmes. At other times, personnel must wear riggers gloves as directed by any NSWFB Officer.

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### Disposable Gloves

Disposable gloves provide hygienic protection from exposure to blood and other body fluids.

All firefighters **must** wear disposable gloves under the GP gloves when responding to rescue incidents, motor vehicle accidents or other calls for medical assistance.

All firefighters must carry one (1) pair of disposable gloves in their uniform pocket, and at least two (2) new pairs per firefighter must be carried on the station appliance(s).



The GP glove may be removed to handle people or bodies provided that there are no sharp objects in the vicinity which could pierce the disposable glove.

Where more than one casualty is handled at an incident and gloves are contaminated by blood or other body fluid, they should be disposed of and a new pair donned before handling the next casualty.

**Caution: If disposable gloves become damaged, they must be removed, hands washed without delay and a new pair donned before any further handling of patients.**

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### Electrical Gloves

Rubber electrical gloves have been designed to insulate against electrical current and voltage (maximum 415V). Electrical gloves must be worn whenever a firefighter may contact electrical apparatus or circuits (*e.g. using a Modiewark voltage detector to detect hidden live wires in a wall*).



**Note:** Precautions given in the *Firefighters Training Manual, Volume 1, Topic 3, Section 11 Electricity* must be followed to ensure the safety of firefighters at incidents involving live electrical conductors.

### Chemical Gloves

Chemical gloves are designed to protect against chemicals, acids and other toxins. Chemical gloves must be worn at hazmat incidents and/or when the Incident Controller (IC) demands this level of protection.



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### Action required

- ✓ Operational/Station Commanders *must* enforce the wearing of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) by all personnel. Correct PPE will greatly reduce or eliminate risks that firefighters face at an incident or training exercise.
- ✓ Station Commanders must conduct an immediate audit of gloves for all personnel under their command.
- ✓ Station Commanders must ensure that all appliances have adequate supplies of disposable rubber and chemical gloves at all times.
- ✓ All firefighters must have one pair of firefighting and one pair of general purpose gloves at all times.
- ✓ Rubber electrical gloves must be replaced annually whether they have been used or not. Station Commanders must keep a record of the receipt date of new gloves. Old gloves must be discarded as soon as new ones are received.
- ✓ Personnel without appropriate gloves must immediately re-order from the NSWFB Supply Catalogue.
- ✓ Firefighters are responsible for correct selection and sizing of firefighting gloves when ordering from the NSWFB Supply Catalogue. Refer to In Orders 2000/8 *Supply of firefighter gloves* for further information.

Attention is drawn to In Order 2004/7 *Reporting work-related incidents to WorkCover NSW*.

In the event of an incident that *'results in a person being unfit for a continuous period of at least seven days,'* notification to the WorkCover Authority is automatic.

**Note! There is no justification for firefighter injuries where injury is due to a lack of appropriate PPE. In the event of injury to a firefighters hand(s), the Station Commander must quarantine the gloves worn by the injured firefighter for future inspection.**

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<b>Noted, Station Commander</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>Other</b>

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>File Number:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
Name: Chief Superintendent Hans Bootsma Assistant Director Capability Development PH (02) 9742-7136	CHO/06178	07 October 2004.

**Previous Operations Bulletin: 2005/3 SABRE Contour SCBA**