



HUMBERSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

People and Development

Breathing Apparatus Welfare Policy

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Person Responsible	Head of Training
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What we must
do well



How we support our
communities



We value and support
the people we employ



We efficiently manage
the Service

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1. INTRODUCTION

Humberside Fire & Rescue Service (HFRS) values and supports its staff and aims to ensure that it develops and cultivates a highly trained and competent workforce.

The HFRS BA Welfare Policy is aligned to NOG Training Specification for Breathing Apparatus and cognisant of:

- Heat, Illness, Preparation, Awareness (HIPA) Guidance provided by the Fire Brigades Union, produced in partnership with Brighton University.
- NOG: Reducing the risk to personnel engaged in breathing apparatus training.

It provides breathing apparatus (BA) wearers, instructors/trainers, and their managers with guidance and procedures to be followed in order to support the welfare of staff engaged in BA training.

For the purposes of this policy:

A “hot wear” is determined as the wearing of BA in any training session where the temperature is elevated above ambient, for a maximum period of the working duration of the contents of one cylinder.

2. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

HFRS has a legal responsibility under the [Equality Act 2010](#), and a commitment, to ensure it does not discriminate either directly or indirectly in any of its functions and services nor in its treatment of staff, in relation to race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief, gender reassignment or marriage and civil partnership. It also has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants, employees and service users.

3. AIM AND OBJECTIVES

- Increased awareness and application of BA welfare guidance and procedures.
- Embed a culture of wellbeing awareness in relation to BA welfare.
- Ensure that the number of exposures to ‘hot wear’ environments is monitored and controlled effectively.
- Minimise the number of exposures to ‘hot wear’ environments for BA instructors/trainers.
- Improve the health and wellbeing of BA instructors/trainers.

4. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- [Equality Impact Assessment](#)
- [Training Policy](#)
- [Competence Policy](#)

- [BA Training Policy](#)
- [Heat, Illness, Preparation and, Awareness \(HIPA\) Guidance](#) provided by the Fire Brigades Union, produced in partnership with Brighton University.
- NFCC – Staff Training & Development
- Joint Emergency Service Interoperability Program (JESIP)
- **Legal References**
 - [The Fire Services Act 2004](#)
 - [Fire and Rescue National Framework for England](#)
 - [Health & Safety at Work Act 1974](#)
 - [Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999](#)
 - [Equality Act 2010](#)
 - [Public Sector Equality Duty \(PSED\)](#)

- **National Guidance**

Training and education will be provided by HFRS Training Section and will be aligned to National Operational Guidance and cognisant of the following (not exhaustive):

- [NOG Training Specification for Breathing Apparatus](#)
- [Reducing the risk to personnel engaged in breathing apparatus training.](#)
- Operational Learning

5. BA WELFARE – RISK CONTROL MEASURES

The emphasis of this guidance is placed on BA wearer, instructor/trainer welfare, and not the delivery of BA training.

In order to support safe practice, the following risk control measures will be applied:

- Hydration.
- Pre & Post ‘Wear’ Cooling.
- BA ‘Wear’ – Monitoring and Management.
- BA Instructor/Trainer Fitness
- Health Surveillance
- PPE Cleaning

Hydration

Pre and Post ‘Wear’ Hydration

BA wearers and instructors or trainers should intake:

- 500 ml of water two hours prior to heat exposure
- 500 ml of water within thirty minutes of heat exposure
- A further 500 ml of water within one hour of heat exposure

Pre & Post 'Wear' Cooling

- **Pre-Cooling**

HIPA guidance recommends iced water/slush as the most effective way of pre-cooling the body's core temperature prior to heat exposure. This pre-cooling will allow the body more time before it gets overheated and therefore is recommended.

BA wearers and instructors or trainers should intake:

- 500 ml of iced water/slush or a combination of both fifteen minutes prior to hot wear

- **Post-Cooling**

BA wearers and instructors or trainers should:

- Remove PPE, following decontamination procedures
- Seek shade, in a well-ventilated area
- Apply radial cooling with cold water

The aim of post-cooling is to reach a minimum of 0.5 degrees within core temperature, prior to any further exposure to heat.

BA 'Wear' – Monitoring and Management

The aim of BA 'Wear' monitoring and management is to monitor, manage and reduce the risk of staff engaged in breathing apparatus training.

- **BA 'Wear' Monitoring**

To ensure that HFRS are cognisant of BA wearer, instructor/trainer exposure to 'hot wears' the following will apply:

- It will be the responsibility of the individual to monitor and record their number of 'hot wears'.
- The number of 'hot wears' will also be monitored by managers; for training section staff this will be monitored by the responsible training manager (SM).
- The central training administrators will hold 'hot wear' data.
- The number of 'hot wears' will be audited every 4 months and appropriate action will be taken if this is not complied with.

- **BA 'Wear' Management (BA Instructors/Trainers only)**

As part of the HIPA guidance provided by the Fire Brigades Union and Brighton University, it is recommended that no more than 9 'hot wears' should be undertaken in any calendar month.

The following frequencies will be adhered to for all 'hot wears', BA instructors/trainers will:

- Not exceed 1 'hot wears' in one day.
- Not exceed 3 'hot wears' within a 7-day rolling period.
- Not exceed 9 'hot wears' within a 28-day rolling period.

These criteria must only be exceeded in exceptional circumstances. Where this occurs, an evaluation of the number of wears will be made, supported by Occupational Health, to determine a suitable rest period which must be taken before any further exposure to hot wears.

BA Instructor/Trainer Fitness

This Policy requires that all staff who are required to wear BA whilst undertaking work in a practical training environment shall:

- Maintain a minimum level of fitness and be tested every six months as defined in the Service's Physical Fitness of Operational Personnel Policy.
- Successfully pass a routine medical assessment at no more than 3 yearly intervals as defined in Service Policy.

Wearers and/or instructors/trainers who do not meet the fitness requirements outlined above, shall not be permitted to wear breathing apparatus.

Health Surveillance

Regulation 6 of The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations requires that "Every employer shall ensure that his employees are provided with such health surveillance as is appropriate, having regard to the risks to their health and safety, as identified by assessment."

To provide additional assurance that the agreed levels BA Wear Management continue to be appropriate, and that BA instructor/trainer health and wellbeing is maintained, BA instructors/trainers will with Occupational Health undergo a 6 monthly 'well-being' check.

PPE Cleaning

In order to reduce the potential for contamination through soiled PPE ((Structural PPE) helmets, and breathing apparatus), regular cleaning must be undertaken, and a core stock maintained to facilitate an appropriate rotation of fire kit.

The following will apply to BA instructors/trainers:

- Clean fire kit must be available each day and must be the correct size for the individual.
- Fire kit must be laundered following each day's use.
- Helmets must be cleaned weekly with their visors removed.
- BA sets and facemasks must be cleaned following each wear (as per guidance).
- The undergarments worn beneath PPE must be manufactured from flame-retardant material and ideally should be wicking.
- Post wear and as soon as practically possible, the instructor/trainer should remove their PPE and decontaminate using surgical wipes prior to showering.

6. REVIEW

In addition to the annual review of this policy the Service will continue to monitor research and will make appropriate amendments as and when required accordingly.

**If you require any further information or guidance in relation to this policy,
please contact the Training Section.**