



National
Operational
Guidance

BA Foundation Element

**Reducing the risk to personnel
engaged in breathing apparatus
training**



NFCC
National Fire
Chiefs Council

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Reducing the risk to personnel engaged in breathing apparatus training

In 2003 the Fire Research and Development Group conducted research into the physiological capabilities of breathing apparatus trainers/instructors when operating in hot conditions (**5/2003: Physical Capabilities of Instructors at the End of Hot Fire Training**). The research focused on the capability of a range of breathing apparatus trainers/instructors to take part in a hot and humid training session and to subsequently be required to perform a rescue of a trainee. Though all of the breathing apparatus trainers/instructors were able to complete the rescue, the research identified that they were placed under significant physiological stresses whilst doing so. As a result, the Fire Research and Development Group identified the importance of ensuring breathing apparatus trainers exposed to hot and humid conditions maintained a level of physical fitness commensurate with the role.

The Guidance and Compliance Framework for Compartment Fire Behaviour **Training** document recommends the following:

“Brigades undertaking compliance framework for compartment fire behaviour training should satisfy themselves, in conjunction with their occupational health adviser, that their recording and monitoring systems are effective and that medical assessment arrangements are available for pre and post exposure for all personnel involved in compartment fire behaviour training”.

Each fire and rescue service should identify how they will monitor, manage and reduce the risk to personnel engaged in breathing apparatus training in realistic conditions, according to the **Guidance on the Management of the Risk of Heat Stress during Training**.

Due to the potential for breathing apparatus instructors to be regularly exposed to breathing apparatus training in realistic conditions, fire and rescue authorities must consider more frequent health screening/monitoring as part of their occupational health and welfare arrangements.