Firefighter Recruitment

Operational Focused Abilities Test (OFAT)

Contents

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The Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) Firefighter Recruitment Operational Focused Abilities Test (OFAT) is a series of operationally focused tasks that are completed in a sequence to simulate tasks which occur at an emergency incident. In order for a candidate to be successful in completing the OFAT, candidates will be required to demonstrate levels of cardiovascular fitness, muscular strength and muscular endurance consistent with the duties of an operational firefighter.

This is a pass/fail test. Applicants are permitted a second attempt at the OFAT within the assessment period, should they be unsuccessful on their first attempt.

Prior to arrival on the OFAT test day, it is expected that applicants have reviewed and understand this document. Candidates are required to advise of any changes to physical health, including medical conditions, since undertaking the medical assessment required for the Beep Test. Candidates will be required to provide evidence of this through the completion of the QFES Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire (PARQ). Candidates are required to arrive on their testing day with the completed QFES PARQ Form to submit at the registration point.

Candidates will be guided through the OFAT by a qualified QFES assessor. The QFES assessor will provide direction and verbal instruction to the candidate throughout the test. It is the responsibility of the candidate to listen and follow all of the instructions provided by the assessor at all times.

What to wear

For the duration of the OFAT, candidates are required to wear a sleeved shirt, long pants and covered in shoes appropriate for exercise throughout the entire test. All shirts must have sleeves. Shoes must be completely enclosed, such as sneakers, runners or joggers. Candidates will be supplied with a protective helmet, harness and gloves; these must be worn as instructed.

All required safety and personal protection equipment will be provided by QFES on the day.

Attire that is considered appropriate for the OFAT is demonstrated below.

Shirts:


Pants:



Shoes:





What not to wear

Due to the task requirements of the OFAT, shorts, skins, leggings, and skirts are not appropriate and cannot be worn. Singlets and small capped sleeves are not acceptable. Watches and all types of jewellery are not to be worn. Open shoes and thongs cannot be worn.

Attire that is considered inappropriate for the OFAT is demonstrated below.

Shirts:

Accessories:

Pants:

Shoes:

Overall OFAT Failures

- Candidates must not run at any stage of the OFAT. Candidates will receive one warning for running and the second infraction constitutes a failure.
- Where a failure is identified, the OFAT time will conclude and the candidate will not continue in the assessment.
- If any piece of equipment is dropped during the tasks, the assessment time will conclude, and the candidate will not continue in the assessment. This constitutes an overall assessment failure.

Candidates should be familiar with each task requirement

Every task has a pass / fail assessment

OFAT Re-Attempt

- Applicants are permitted a re-attempt of the physical assessment should they fail their first attempt at the OFAT.
- Applicants have the ability to re-attempt the physical assessment on another day within the physical assessment period of the campaign they are applying for.
- The physical assessment in its entirety must be completed again on a re-attempt.

OFAT Overview – The Three (3) Parts

Applicants are required to successfully complete all 3 parts of the OFAT.

PART 1 - Overview

A pass/fail component and consists of **a road crash rescue equipment hold**:

Part 1 involves the candidate undertaking a road crash rescue equipment hold, which is either pass or fail. The candidate is required to wear the appropriate safety equipment and successfully complete a timed hold of operational rescue equipment at three different set heights for a set period of time.

For a candidate to be successful, this task must be completed in ***under 4 minutes 10 seconds***. If the candidate is successful in achieving this, they will be given a two (2) minute break and proceed to *Part 2*.

PART 2 - Overview

A timed component, also pass/fail, and consists of **six (6)** stations:

1. *Low-level high-rise stair climb*
2. *Forcible Entry*
3. *Ladders*
4. *Equipment Haul*
5. *Flaked Hose Drag*
6. *Life Rescue*

Part 2 is a timed 6 station test designed to test the physical abilities of the candidate. The time designated for successful completion of *Part 2* is ***under 8 minutes 35 Seconds***.

Two stopwatches will be used to record the time for each candidate. One stopwatch will be designated as the official assessment time and the second is a backup, should mechanical failure occur.

A 20kg weighted vest will be worn by the candidate to simulate the weight a firefighter carries i.e. protective clothing and a self-contained breathing apparatus. The 20kg vest will be put on

by the candidate prior to starting *Part 2* of the OFAT and will remain on until completion of *Part 2.* Additional 2 x 6kg shoulder weights will be added for *Station 1* of *Part 2.*

The candidate will also be required to wear a harness, hard hat with a chin strap and gloves (all provided) throughout the entire assessment.

The tools, equipment and props used in the assessment have been chosen to provide a safe, consistent and valid measure of a candidate's physical abilities.

For safety purposes no running is allowed between or during tasks. Following the successful completion of *Part 2* the candidate will be given a two (2) minute break before proceeding to *Part 3.*

PART 3 - Overview

A pass/fail component and consists of **a case 1 high pressure hose reel drag**:

Part 3 involves the candidate undertaking a case 1 hose drag, which is either pass or fail. The candidate is required to wear the appropriate safety equipment and successfully drag out the required 90m of case 1 high pressure hose. This is a timed task and in order for a candidate to be successful, this task must be completed in ***under 3 minutes 24 seconds***.

If the candidate is successful in achieving this, they will have successfully completed the OFAT.

OFAT

Part 1

Personal protective equipment

Prior to the commencement of *Part 1* the candidate is required to wear the supplied helmet and gloves. All equipment will be supplied.

PART 1 - Station 1: Road Crash Rescue Cutter Hold

Equipment

- Holmatro hydraulic rescue cutter NCT II 4050 or similar equipment weighing 19kg

Task

This task involves the candidate holding hydraulic rescue cutters at three (3) predetermined positions for 20 seconds at each position. The candidate is required to complete **three evolutions of the three position holds**. This task is aimed at simulating a firefighter having to use hydraulic rescue tools to free a trapped person from a road traffic crash.

Process

The candidate is required to grip the hydraulic rescue cutters by the "D" handle and the operating handle and maintain a static hold in three predetermined hold positions for 20 seconds each. The three predetermined positions are:

- Bottom of the 'B' pillar ***(575-725mm)***
- Dash height ***(1075-1225mm)***
- Top of the 'B' pillar ***(1475-1625mm)***

Once the candidate is in position and the time has started, they are required to maintain that position for the full 20 seconds. Following the completion of the above shoulder hold, one evolution is

complete. The candidate is required to complete three full evolutions. The candidate is allowed to rest at any stage through the cutter hold.

Bottom of 'B' pillar ***(575-725mm)***

The candidate will grip the hydraulic rescue cutters by the "D" handle and the operating handle with an over hand grip. The candidate will then bend their knees slightly, so the hydraulic rescue cutters are parallel to the ground and in between the two lowest markers on the height pole. The candidate will hold this position for 20 seconds while maintaining good core stability and postural control. The candidate will not rest any part of the rescue tool on their body during this process.

Dash height ***(1075-1225mm)***

The candidate will maintain the grip on the hydraulic rescue cutters, and while maintaining good core stability and postural control, lift the cutters up to chest height and in between the two markers. The candidate may also choose to remain standing and while maintaining the current grip as the previous hold, use a controlled manor to manoeuvre the hydraulic rescue cutters into the above shoulder position and squat down until the tips are at the red middle marker height. The candidate will hold this position for 20 seconds and not rest any part of the tool on their body.

Top of 'B' pillar ***(1475-1625mm)***

The candidate will remain standing and while maintaining the current grip as the previous hold, use a controlled manor to manoeuvre the hydraulic rescue cutters into the above shoulder position. The hydraulic rescue cutters will be held parallel to the ground and in between the two highest markers on the height pole. The candidate's elbows are to remain close to the body but not rest on the body. The candidate will hold this position for 20 seconds and not rest any part of the tool on their body. Once the 20 second hold is complete the candidate may then start the second evolution.

NB. If the candidate used this technique on the second height they can just stand up from the squat position until the cutters are at the top height.

Warning

- The hydraulic rescue cutters can touch the body but not rest on it.
- The candidate fails to keep the tool parallel to the ground.
- One warning will be given and the second infringement will constitute a failure of the task.
- If the tips of the hydraulic rescue cutters touch either height bar on any of the 3 levels a

warning will be given.

- One warning will be given and the second infringement will constitute a failure of the task.
- **NB this warning will reset every time a height is complete.**

Failures

A failure on this task will occur if:

- The candidate drops or loses control of the tool at any stage.
- The candidate fails to complete the 3 evolutions of the 3 hold positions in **under 4 minutes 10 seconds.**

Following the completion of the third evolution of the top of the 'B' pillar hold the candidate is required to place the tool on the ground. Once the tool is placed safely on the ground, the time will stop and the assessment is complete. The candidate will be given a 2 minute break following successful completion of this task before commencing Part 2.

Part 2

Personal protective equipment

Prior to the commencement of Part 2 the candidate is required to wear the supplied helmet, harness, a 20kg weighted vest and gloves. All equipment will be supplied.

PART 2 - Station 1: Low-Level High-Rise Stair Climb

Equipment

- Stair Master stair climbing machine
- Additional 2x 6kg shoulder weights/straps

Task

This task involves the candidate walking on a Stair Master stair climbing machine while wearing a 20kg weighted vest with an additional 2x 6kg weighted shoulder straps. The candidate will be required to walk on the Stair Master stair climbing machine for ***3:00 minutes*** at a rate of 60 steps per minute. This task is aimed at simulating a firefighter in full personal protective clothing (PPC) carrying either an attack pack or feed pack up a flight of stairs in a low-level high-rise building to a fire. Current legislation does not require buildings under 25m high to have fire lifts installed; the time spent on the Stair Master stair climbing machine is equivalent to the number of stairs that would be climbed in the event of a fire in these structures.

Process

The candidate will be ready to begin with their 20kg vest and helmet on. Once ready, the assessors will place an additional 2x 6kg shoulder straps onto the vest ready for the test to begin.

The candidate will be given a 20 second warm up on the Stair Master set at 50 steps per minute. The candidate should use this time to get comfortable on the Stair Master and establish a rhythm. During this warm up period the candidate is permitted to dismount the Stair Master or grasp the hand rail in order to assist them with establishing their balance and rhythm.

Note: Candidates are permitted to restart this warmup process ***twice*** **only** before it will constitute a failure on the second infringement.

The test will automatically start at the end of the 20 second warm up period. The assessor will

countdown the end of the warm up period with “3,2,1, START”. Once the assessor has said “START” the Stair Master step rate will be increased to 60 steps per minute for the 3:00 minute period. The assessor will notify the candidate once the 3:00 minute period is complete, and only then can the candidate dismount the Stair Master. The assessor will then assist the candidate in removing the 2x 6kg shoulder straps from the candidate’s vest and then the candidate will be instructed to move to the next station.

Warning

During the assessment if the candidate briefly or momentarily brushes the handrail on the Stair Master for balance purposes only, they will not be failed. However, candidates are only permitted to do this twice during the test before it will constitute a failure on the third infringement.

Failures

A failure on this task will occur if:

- The candidate falls or dismounts the Stair Master **three times** during the warm up period.
- The candidate falls or dismounts the Stair Master prior to completion of the 3:00 minutes.
- The candidate grasps any of the assessment equipment.
- The candidate receives more than two warnings for any infraction listed above.

Part 2 – Station 2: Forcible Entry

Equipment

- Forcible entry simulation machine
- 4.5kg Sledgehammer

Task

This task involves the candidate using a sledgehammer to hammer in a force plate. This task is aimed at simulating a firefighter having to use break and enter equipment to open a locked door or to breech a wall.

Process

The candidate is required to use a 4.5kg sledgehammer to strike a set target area on a preset force

plate until the force plate has been hammered all the way in and the assessor calls stop.

Once the task is complete and the assessor has called stop, the candidate is required to **place** the sledgehammer standing upright on the ground and then proceed to the next station.

Failures

A failure on this task will occur if:

- The candidate fails to maintain control of the sledgehammer.
- The candidate releases the sledgehammer from either hand while swinging.
- The candidate misses the target area or contacts the frame of the rig.

Part 2 – Station 3: Ladder Raise, Extend, House & Lower

Equipment

- 1x fixed pivot 8.8m fibreglass extension ladder.

Task

This task involves the candidate lifting up an extension ladder from the ground, placing it against a structure, fully extending the ladder, housing the ladder and then lowering it back to the ground. This task is aimed at simulating a firefighter having to place an extension ladder against a structure, then extending the ladder to its maximum extension for maximum access, and then reversing the procedure to make up the piece of equipment.

Process

The candidate will position themselves at the head of the extension ladder lying on the ground. The candidate will then lift the ladder off the ground with 2 hands via the first rung or the head of the ladder. The candidate will then raise the ladder by walking in and utilising a continuous hand over hand motion and grasping each and every rung with one hand only until the ladder is upright and resting against the structure. The candidate is then required to extend the sliding section of the ladder utilising a continuous hand over hand technique until the sliding section is fully extended. Once an assessor has notified the candidate the ladder is at full extension, the candidate is then required to reverse this process and house the ladder.

Then the candidate is required to lower the ladder back to the ground in a controlled fashion by walking backwards, grasping each rung with one hand only at a time and utilising a hand over hand technique until the ladder is ***placed*** on the ground. The candidate can grasp the head of the ladder or final rung with two hands in order to place the ladder on the ground. Once completed the candidate can continue on to the next station.

Note: The candidate must maintain control of the ladder at all times and only use the ladder rungs, not the outside stringers, to raise and lower the ladder. The candidate is also required to grasp every rung on the raise and lower process. Skipping a rung will constitute a failure.

Failures

A failure on this task will occur if:

- The candidate misses a rung during the raise or lower process.
- The candidate fails to maintain control of the ladder at any stage.
- The ladder contacts the candidate's helmet at any stage.
- The candidate is unable to fully extend the ladder using a continuous hand over hand technique.
- The candidate allows the rope to slip through their hands and the ladder falls uncontrollably.
- The candidate uses 2 hands to grasp each run on either the raise or lowering process.

Part 2 – Station 4: Equipment Haul

Equipment

- Elevated Platform – minimum 4m high with an additional 1m high handrail
- 15kg of weights
- GP line
- Harness tethered off to a safety point

Task

This task involves the candidate climbing up the elevated platform and then hauling up a 15kg weight before lowering it back down to the ground. This task is aimed at simulating a firefighter in full PPE climbing to the roof top of a low-level building before hauling up a hose and firefighting equipment from the fire appliance to an elevated fire area. The task then also simulates the firefighter returning this gear back to the ground for make up once the incident is completed. This task involves 2 evolutions of the haul and lower process.

Process

The candidate will climb up the stairs of the elevated platform (minimum 4m high) while wearing a 20kg weighted vest, helmet, harness and gloves. The candidate will then be tethered off to a safety line by an assessor and only then are they permitted to lean over the railing and grasp the rope with the weight attached. While leaning over the railing, so not to use the railing as leverage for the haul, the candidate will utilise a ***continuous hand over hand*** technique on the rope to haul up the 15kg weight to the 5m railing height. The candidate is then required to grasp the 15kg weight and lift it over the railing and ***place*** it flat on the ground beside them. Once this has been completed the assessor will notify the candidate and then the candidate will reverse this process by picking up the 15kg weight and while maintaining control place it over the top of the railing. The candidate will then lower the weight to the ground utilising a ***continuous hand over hand*** technique on the rope. Once the weight has touched the ground the candidate will be notified by the assessor and they can commence the second evolution. Upon successful completion of the second evolution the candidate will be disconnected from the safety line and are able to descend the stairs of the elevated platform and proceed to the next station.

Note:

- It is the responsibility of the candidate to manage their own rope as they haul the weight up so it does not tangle.
- The candidate is permitted to use either a continuous hand over hand or a continuous hand under hand technique.

Failures

A failure on this task will occur if:

- The candidate fails to maintain control of the rope.

- Candidates are required to maintain control of the rope at all times and letting the rope slip through your hands either during the hauling or lowering phase. This will constitute a failure if it happens.

- The candidate fails to maintain control of the weight while they are lifting it over the railing and the weight contacts the top railing.
- The candidate is required to place the weight flat on the ground and dropping the weight on the ground will constitute a failure.
- The required technique of this exercise is a continuous hand over hand haul and lower of the weight. Failing to maintain this continuous hand over hand movement or stopping at any stage, other than to manage the rope, during the hauling or lowering process will constitute a failure.

Part 2 – Station 5: Flaked Hose Drag

Equipment

- 2 x 64mm Duraline hose and couplings
- 1 x AWG branch
- 1x Barrell

Task

This task involves the candidate grasping a hose line and nozzle and dragging the dry hose to a set area, via an obstacle and then placing one knee on the ground and dragging additional hose into the marked square. This task is aimed at simulating a firefighter in full PPE taking a hose line and nozzle from the fire appliance to a fire before water is turned on. The task then also simulates the firefighter pulling through sufficient hose to their location to ensure they have enough hose to allow them to be able to advance forward if required.

Process

There will be 60m of 64mm dry duraline hose flaked out on the ground with a hose line nozzle attached at one end. The candidate will grasp the nozzle and a section of 64mm hose, up to the first mark (2.25m), and place it over their shoulder, across their chest or by their side so it can drag behind them. The candidate will then drag the hose 23m to a marked drum and make a 90 degree turn around the drum and continue a further 8m to a preset marked square. Once the candidate has reached this

square, they will **remain in there, placing** the nozzle on the ground (**inside** the square). The candidate must then place at least one knee on the ground and pull a further 15.25m of hose into the square, utilising a continuous hand over hand technique and maintaining good postural control.

Once sufficient hose has been pulled through into the marked square, the assessor will notify the candidate. The candidate will then ensure all of the hose is located inside the square, at which point the candidate can then leave the square and continue to the next station.

Note: During the continuous hand over hand hose pull, at least one knee is to remain on the ground at all times and the candidate's whole body must remain within the box at all times.

Warning

- The candidate does not maintain one knee on the ground at all times or sits on their foot while kneeling, they will be warned.
- If any part of the candidate's body goes outside the marked square, they will be warned.
- There will be a total of TWO warnings given and the third warning will constitute a failure of the assessment.

Failures

A failure on this task will occur if:

- The candidate fails to manoeuver around the outside of the drum and stay within the marked cones with the hose.
- The candidate fails to maintain a continuous hand over hand technique during the hose pull (uses a 1,2 pull method or a row method).

Part 2 – Station 6: Life Rescue

Equipment

- 85kg mannequin equipped with a harness that has integrated shoulder handles

Task

This task involves the candidate dragging an 85kg (being the average weight of an Australian adult) mannequin out to and around a preset marker and back to the original starting point. Current legislation requires an exit to be located no further than 20m from any point in a building level. This task is aimed at simulating a firefighter having to remove a casualty or fellow firefighter from a point of danger to a point of safety.

Process

The candidate is required grasp the 85kg mannequin by the shoulder handles on the harness and drag it to a preset marker 15m away. Once the candidate has reached this marker, they are required to make a 180 degree turn around the marker and then return back to the starting point. The candidate is permitted to have a stop in momentum once only during the drag. This stop can be to either rest or adjust their grip if required.

The task is complete once the assessor confirms the entire mannequin has crossed the marked start line. Once the mannequin has crossed the line the candidate can proceed to the next station.

Warning

The candidate is allowed to stop ***once only*** and this can be for fatigue or to reset their grip on the mannequin. A second stop and reset will constitute a failure.

When grabbing the handles, the candidate must not slide their hands through the straps for extra support or double wrap the straps around their wrists for support.

Failures

A failure on this task will occur if:

- The candidate allows the mannequin to touch the 180 degree turn marker.
- The candidate grasps or rests on the designated marker.
- The candidate stops twice through the test.
- The candidate falls over during the assessment.

Following the completion of the life rescue the time will stop and Part 2 of the assessment is complete. The candidate will be given a 2 minute break following successful completion before commencing Part 3.

Part 3

Personal protective equipment

Prior to the commencement of Part 3 the candidate is required to wear the supplied helmet and gloves. All equipment will be supplied.

PART 3 – Station 1: Case 1 Hose Reel Drag

Equipment

- Case 1 hose reel drum & 90m case 1 hose

Task

This task involves the candidate grasping the nozzle and up to 2m of case 1 hose line and walking out the hose line a set distance 45m. The candidate will then return back to the hose reel drum and grasp up to 2m of case 1 hose line and walk out the hose line the remaining 45m before extending the hose out its entire 90m length. This task is aimed at simulating a firefighter arriving at an incident where the truck is positioned some distance from the fire. In these instances, the other members from the crew can be tasked with completing other duties and a firefighter can be tasked with getting the hose and water to the fire by themselves. Due to the weight of the hose and resistance from the hose drum, the firefighter will be required to complete this task in two actions.

Process

The candidate will grasp the hose line nozzle and a section of case 1 hose up to the first mark (2m) and place it over their shoulder so the hose nozzle is held off the ground and the hose can drag behind them. The candidate will then drag the hose, with forward facing momentum only, 45m to a preset marker and **place** the nozzle and hose line on the ground. The candidate will then return back to the hose reel drum and grab another 2m bight of the hose and pull out the remaining 45m of hose to the set marker. The assessor will notify the candidate once they have successfully pulled the 90m off the hose reel drum and then they can pick up the hose line and nozzle and extend the hose line out the full 90m. Once the hose line has been extended the full amount the candidate will place the hose nozzle on the ground and then the test will be complete. The candidate has 3minutes 24seconds to complete this test

Warning

- If the candidate walks backwards with hose at any stage.
- If the candidate drags the nozzle along the ground at any stage.
- There will be a total of **ONE** warning given and the second warning will constitute a failure of the assessment.

Failures

A failure on this task will occur if:

- The candidate fails to drag the hose line 45m either time.
- The candidate fails to extend the hose line the full 90m.
- The candidate fails to complete the 90m extension under 3 minutes 24 seconds

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