

CLIMB THE LADDER TO A SATISFYING CAREER

Assessments of Firefighter Applicants



Stages

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Introduction

Applicants must pass all selection processes in order to be offered a position with the NSW Fire Brigades (NSWFB). Accordingly the selection process may take up to 12 months to complete. Please be aware that placement on the waiting list does not guarantee progression to further selection stages as the number of positions available is limited.

The following pages outline the various assessment stages required to gain employment as a firefighter. For more detail on the various assessment processes, please go to our website at www.fire.nsw.gov.au

1. Online application

To have your online application accepted, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Be an Australian Citizen or Permanent resident
- Possess a current and valid Driver's Licence (minimum provisional P2 licence)
- Have a good driving record
- Be prepared to work anywhere in Sydney
- Prior to commencing recruit training, successful applicants must hold a Medium Rigid Driver's Log Book (it is not essential to possess this at the time of applying)

2. Online assessment

Once an application has been accepted, the applicant will be invited to complete an online assessment. This online questionnaire will take approximately 25 minutes. It is not possible to prepare for the online questionnaire as it determines such attributes as learning ability and reliability. Hence there are no relevant study materials available.



3. Physical Aptitude Test

All applicants reaching this selection stage must undergo a physical assessment called the Physical Aptitude Test (PAT). The PAT is a method of assessing whether applicants have the minimum physical capacity which could be required of a firefighter in an emergency situation. The PAT has 2 components:

1. The **Shuttle Run** is designed to measure cardiovascular fitness. This test requires running at an increasing pace back and forth between two markers set 20 metres apart. It is strongly recommended that applicants obtain a copy of the Shuttle Run Assessment (tape/CD) from the Australian Sports Commission, PO Box 176, Belconnen ACT 2616, phone (02) 6214 1111, or order it on-line from the Australian Sports Commission.

If you can't get a copy of the Shuttle Run Assessment, you can test your progress using other fitness tests. For example, the Shuttle Run standard of Level 9 Shuttle 6 is roughly equivalent to being able to run a distance of 2.4 km in under 11 minutes. (This information is current, but may be reviewed at any time.)

Preparing for the PAT

Applicants are advised to prepare for the PAT, basing their training on the actual requirements of the PAT. Applicants will be given an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the tests and equipment used.

Don't expect to prepare for your PAT in a short timeframe. Start your training as soon as possible, and progressively increase your workload right up until the time of the test. Keeping a training diary is a good way to monitor your progress. Always remember that if you stop training, you will lose the fitness that you have gained. Make sure you seek medical clearance before starting your exercise program.

2. The **Firefighting Task Course** is designed to simulate actual firefighting tasks. This course requires applicants to successfully complete the following 11 nominated tasks (listed below) in succession within the nominated time limits.

- Ladder climb
- Hose coupling
- Ladder raise and lower
- Tunnel crawl
- Beam walk
- Chain cutting
- Hose reel drag
- Hose drag and hold
- Tower climb and container haul
- Tower climb and visual recognition
- Firefighter rescue

For descriptions and video demonstrations of the various tasks, see: [Physical Aptitude Test \(PAT\)](#)

If you don't know how to train, get help. Preferably seek assistance from a person with a degree in Sport Science or Human Movement. If you can't find someone, contact the Australian Association of Exercise and Sport Science (www.aeess.com.au) and ask them to recommend a trainer/coach.

[PAT Applicant Preparation Guide](#) (PDF)

[PAT Summary for Medical Practitioners](#) (PDF)



4. Interview

The interview provides applicants with the opportunity to demonstrate their suitability for and understanding of the role of Permanent Firefighter. The interview panel consists of a representative from NSWFB Human Resources, a NSWFB Firefighter

and an independent member. The outcome of the interview will determine whether a applicant progresses to the next selection stage

5. Medical assessment

Applicants who successfully complete the online assessment, the Physical Aptitude Test and an interview will be invited to attend a medical

assessment. Applicants must satisfy all NSWFB medical requirements in order to progress.

What does the medical assessment involve?

- **Health questionnaire** - applicants will be required to accurately answer questions regarding medical history.
- **Physical examination** - this includes a medical examination by the NSWFB Medical Officer, and includes lung function test, hearing test, vision test (including colour vision), urine test and pathology test.
- **Time** - the employment medical assessment will take approximately 1-1½ hours to complete.
- **Supporting medical information** - applicants with pre-existing medical conditions are encouraged to bring medical reports, x-rays or other medical information to assist the NSWFB's Medical Officer in assessing the individual case.
- **Confidentiality** - all medical information collected as part of the medical assessment will be considered confidential, and will be released only with the specific written consent of the applicant, or in accordance with legal requirements.

Medical guidelines for firefighter applicants

The following document is a general guideline for the information of applicants for firefighting positions with the NSWFB. The document reflects national and international medical standards for fire and emergency service workers. The NSWFB adopts a risk management approach to medical assessments, taking into consideration the circumstances of each applicant on a case-by-case basis.

The NSWFB is unable to give medical advice prior to a medical assessment. Applicants with particular medical questions should review the appropriate section of this document and seek the opinion of an appropriately qualified medical professional. The guidelines presented in this document are reviewed on a regular basis and will change with appropriate supporting medical evidence.

[Medical guidelines for firefighter applicants](#) (PDF, 135Kb)



6. Background checks

Referee checks

Applicant's work performance and work attitudes are assessed by contacting two current or previous supervisors.

National criminal history record check

All firefighter applicants who satisfy NSWFB medical requirements must undergo a national criminal history record check. A criminal record does not necessarily preclude an applicant from employment.

Those applicants found to have a criminal record are asked to attend an interview to specifically discuss the issue and each case is assessed on an individual basis.

Driving history check

The NSWFB is an emergency service provider and firefighters drive under emergency conditions.

Applicants who are placed on the waiting list will be required to provide a certified copy of their driving history from the RTA (or equivalent interstate authority), as being in possession of a good driving record is an essential selection criteria for the position.

Driving convictions do not necessarily preclude an applicant from employment. Each driving history will be assessed with consideration to the nature of the

offence, the frequency and recency of offences, and any mitigating or extenuating circumstances.

All applicants applying for positions will have their driving history assessed before being considered for further progression in the Firefighter Recruitment Campaign.



7. Prerequisites

If you are successful in gaining a position as a recruit firefighter with the NSW Fire Brigades, you will be required to obtain a Medium Rigid Driver's Log Book. To acquire a Log Book you need to go to an RTA Motor Registry and:

- provide a current photo-licence
- fill in a licence application form
- pass the RTA Knowledge Test for a Medium Rigid licence (Cost \$35)
- pass an eyesight test.
- inform the RTA you will be obtaining your licence through the Heavy Vehicle Competency Based Assessment and obtain a log book.

Note: the Heavy Vehicle Driver Handbook is available for download on the RTA website; and the Knowledge Test pass is valid for 36 months.

Note: Any applicant who is experiencing difficulty or financial hardship in meeting any of the requirements for recruitment process, should contact the NSWFB's Recruitment Section, see details below.

For further information please visit our website at

www.fire.nsw.gov.au

T: (02) 9265 2636

F: (02) 9265 2883

E: recruitment@fire.nsw.gov.au

