

# Firefighters axe - technical information

New policy number: **387**  
 Old instruction number: **TEC:D060:a1**  
 Issue date: **28 February 2005**  
 Reviewed as current: **14 June 2024**  
 Owner: **Assistant Director, Property and TSS**  
 Responsible work team: **Fleet Liaison Engineering and Equipment Team**

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## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy describes the fibreglass handled firefighters axe and explains its use and how to test and maintain it.



LFB image id: 121168

## 2 Description

- 2.1 The fibreglass handled firefighters axe conforms to BS 7833: 1995.

### Technical Details

- Weight: 0.95 kg.
  - Length: 38 cm (15").
- 2.2 The axe has a forged carbon steel head bonded to a solid Nuplaglas® shaft by an epoxy bond between the head and handle. The handle is fitted with reverse rubber tapers to assist grip when gloves are wet or slippery. The head has a black epoxy coating to assist with preventing rust.
- 2.3 The yellow 'Nuplaglas' shaft is an insulating shaft, but it is not intended as a piece of special equipment to allow personnel to operate on live electrical circuits. It should instead be regarded as a tool that can give an added degree of safety in circumstances where a live circuit may be accidentally contacted.
- 2.4 Carried on Pump Ladders & Pumps. The axe does not need to be stored in an axe pouch.

## 3 Safety precautions

- 3.1 Full structural firefighting PPE (including gloves) should be worn when using this equipment, making sure eyes are protected using the helmet visor.
- 3.2 The fact that the shaft of the axe is insulated is not a guarantee that the user is safe from electrical shock. Additional safeguards have to be observed when work is carried out on electrical equipment, particularly in view of the fact that the axe may often be used in wet conditions.
- 3.3 Nitrile gloves (available on POMS – V2481/2/3) should be worn when cleaning and maintaining this equipment.

## 4 Operating instructions

- 4.1 The firefighters axe is designed to be used as a general-purpose tool at all types of incidents.
- 4.2 The firefighters axe is designed to lever, prise and puncture light gauge metals and plastics and to cut timber.
- 4.3 The firefighters axe has the ability to open budget locks using the tapered end of the head.

## 5 Maintenance and testing

- On acceptance
- After use
- Daily

- 5.1 On acceptance after use and daily, the firefighters axe should be inspected, cleaned and maintained as required, it should always be stowed clean and dry.

### Cleaning

- 5.2 Clean with warm soapy water and cloth, rinse with clean water and dry with paper towels.
- 5.3 Any surface rust can be rubbed down with emery cloth (POMS-V1981) and wiped clean with a rag.
- 5.4 A light coat of WD-40 (POMS-V2789) can be applied to the head of the axe and wiped clean with a dry cloth, ensure that it is not applied to the handle.

### Inspection

- 5.5 Check that the epoxy bond between head and handle is intact and that the connection is secure.
- 5.6 Check condition of edge of blade making sure it is not excessively burred, chipped or pitted.
- 5.7 Check that the 'Nuplaglas' shaft is undamaged and not splintering.
- 5.8 Check condition of the rubber handle checking that the reverse tapers are not damaged or worn.
- 5.9 The following information should be clearly and indelibly marked on the axe:
  - The manufacturers name or trademark
  - A mark to identify the relevant batch
  - The number of the British Standard (BS 7833: 1995)
- 5.10 Any defects should be reported via POMS as in Section 6 below.
- 5.11 There is no longer any need to record test results for the firefighters axe on a Form 426 Standard test card, as this item of equipment is inspected as operationally ready as part of the OE inventory undertaken at change of watch.

## 6 Defects

- 6.1 The Axe - Firefighters (S9198) is available on POMS as a category B item under the Vehicle & Equipment contract.

## **7 Associated material**

7.1 To be read in conjunction with the following material where necessary:

- Policy number 540 – Manual handling operations procedure.
- Policy number 598 – Provision and use of work equipment.
- Policy number 617 – Personal protective equipment at work procedure
- Policy number 707 – The control of infection and infectious diseases policy
- Policy number 724 – Appliance inventories and operational readiness
- Policy number 985 – Operational safety management - knowledge skills and competence –  
NOG
- Policy number 1000 – Fire contaminants

## Document history

### Assessments

An equality, sustainability or health, safety and welfare impact assessment and/or a risk assessment was last completed on:

EIA	19/05/21	SDIA	L - 02/06/21	HSWIA	03/05/18	RA	
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### Audit trail

Listed below is a brief audit trail, detailing amendments made to this policy/procedure.

Page/para nos.	Brief description of change	Date
Page 2, para 1.1 & 2.1 Page 3 sect 4 & section 5	Content updated. New section – Safety added. News sections added: Inspection Frequency, 5.6 and 5.7.	09/12/2008
Throughout	This policy has been reviewed as current. Minor wording changes have been made throughout but no changes have been made to the content.	09/12/2011
Page 1	Responsible work team changed from Engineering Fleet and Equipment Team to Fleet Liaison Engineering and Equipment Team.	29/10/2012
Throughout	Premier FireServe has been updated to 'the service provider.'	11/12/2012
Page 4	Subject list and FOIA exemptions tables updated.	22/12/2014
Throughout Section 7	Reviewed as current. Minor wording changes made throughout. Additional requirements added to section 5.6 Associated material added.	27/02/2015
Throughout	This policy has been reviewed as current. Changes made throughout relating to maintenance and testing, and changes made as a result of the replacement of London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority to London Fire Commissioner. Please re-read whole document to familiarise yourself.	25/04/2018
Throughout	Policy reviewed as current with minor changes made.	03/06/2021
Throughout	Cross references updated.	23/06/2022
Throughout Section 7	Reviewed as current. PN1000 added to associated material.	14/06/2024

### Subject list

You can find this policy under the following subjects.

Equipment – operational	Small gear
Technical information	Axe

# Freedom of Information Act exemptions

This policy/procedure has been securely marked due to:

<b>Considered by:</b> (responsible work team)	<b>FOIA exemption</b>	<b>Security marking classification</b>