ARFF Physical Aptitude Test
Advice to applicants

Fire fighting is a physically demanding occupation. The Aviation Rescue Fire Fighting (ARFF) Physical Aptitude Test (PAT) consists of tasks which simulate work carried out by fire fighters at emergency incidents. The PAT is used to gauge if a candidate's level of fitness is suitable for successful completion of the Recruit Training Course and as a career fire fighter. The PAT can be a physically demanding test.

Your physical preparation prior to the PAT will play a large part in determining your success. The better physically prepared you are will likely increase your ability to cope with the repeated and enduring physical tasks that form the basis of the assessment.

Your preparation should include aspects of the following physical qualities.

1) Aerobic capacity
2) Anaerobic capacity
3) Muscular strength and power
4) Muscular endurance
5) Manual handling ability
6) Mobility and flexibility

If you are unsure how to best prepare physically it is recommended you seek assistance from a suitably qualified exercise and/or medical professional. They will be able to provide you with advice and guidance on the physical preparation required for completion of the PAT.

On the day off assessment, candidates should ensure they are adequately hydrated and have consumed food for the energy required to complete the testing. Candidates should bring the following items with them on the day:

- appropriate clothing (t-shirt, singlet, shorts, appropriate footwear) and change of clothes
- water bottle
- food
- towel.

The following images show each of the tasks required for successful completion of the PAT. During the PAT candidates will be required to wear:

- personal protective equipment
- self-contained breathing apparatus (excluding face piece)
- fire fighting helmet
- gloves
- ankle weights to replicate the weight of firefighting boots.

The PAT is divided into three stages and candidates should note the criteria and requirements for each of the tasks. All stages of the PAT must be completed satisfactorily and within the prescribed timeframes for the candidate to be considered acceptable.

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STAGE 1:
Simulated Ladder Raise

Using the resistance reel and straight bar attachment loaded to 29kg of vertical force, this test simulates the raising and lowering of a 10.5 metre ladder.

- To complete this task candidates should: position their feet shoulder width apart, squat down and with an overhand grip take hold of the bar
- Use your legs to commence the lift, and then raise the bar to chin height.
- Squat again and then position your arms under the bar.
- Drive initially from your legs before pushing the bar above overhead, in one continuous movement, until your arms are fully extended.
- The bar may then be lowered to the ground.
- Candidates will have two attempts to perform a successful lift before progressing to Stage 2.

Candidates will be deemed unsuccessful if:
- unable to push the bar overhead
- unable to keep the bar straight
- drop the bar.

Stage 1 is not timed.
STAGE 2:
The four tasks in Stage 2 must be completed in 15 minutes.

Task 1: Single Sided Jerry Can Carry
The task involves gripping a 26kg jerry can in one hand and lifting it off the ground, using a half squat. The single sided jerry can carry simulates repeat work efforts involving manual handling or equipment. Candidates will be required to carry the jerry can, a distance of 195 metres – this is six and half laps of the marked 30 metre course.

To complete this task candidates:
- should perform all lifting and carrying using only one hand at a time
- may stop at any time and swap hands, as often as you wish
- if you wish to swap hands, place the jerry can on the ground, grip with your other hand, and use the half squat technique to lift again
- need to complete the 195 metres.

Candidates will be deemed unsuccessful if they:
- fail to complete 195 metres of single sided jerry can carry
- use two hands to carry at any time
- change hands whilst walking
- drop or drag the jerry can
- run during the assessment.

Task 2: Stair Climb with Single Sided Jerry Can Carry
For this task candidates will be required to grip a 17.5 kg jerry can in one hand and lift it using the half squat lift. The stair climb with single sided jerry can carry simulates load carriage of equipment whilst climbing stairs. You will be required to step up and down for 36 steps. A complete step is both feet on the step and both feet returning to the ground.

Candidates may swap the hand gripping the jerry can at any time. To swap place the jerry can on the ground, change hands, and lift using a half squat, before starting again.

To complete this task candidates should:
- grip a 17.5 kg jerry can in one hand and lift it using the half squat lift
- step up and down for 36 steps
- ensure a complete step is both feet on the step and both feet returning to the ground
- if they need to swap hands, place the jerry can on the ground, change hands, and lift using a half squat, before starting again.

Candidates will be deemed unsuccessful if they:
- are unable to complete 36 steps
- do not step completely onto platform
- use two hands to carry jerry can
- drop the jerry can
- change hands while stepping.
Task 3: Rescue Tool Static Hold

Using the 19kg simulated rescue tool candidates will perform three static holds at different heights. This task simulates the use of operational equipment to gain access to persons involved in motor vehicle accidents. The rescue tool is held at shoulder level, waist level and knee level.

Shoulder level hold:
- Grip the rescue tool as shown and lift it from the ground using a squat lift or lunge. You will need a firm grip and stable stance before lifting the tool to shoulder height.
- Hold the rescue tool in position with the centre bar above shoulder height and parallel to the ground for 40 seconds.
- You must ensure the tool does not rest on any part of your body. After 40 seconds return the tool safely to the ground.
- You will have a 20 second rest before progressing to the waist level hold.

Waist level hold:
- Grip the rescue tool as per the first hold and lift it from the ground using a squat lift or lunge.
- The tool is not to rest on any part of your body.
- For this hold your arms should be bent and not locked straight.
- You need to hold the tool parallel, at waist height, for 40 seconds.
- After 40 seconds return the tool safely to the ground, using the squat or lunge technique.
- You will have a 20 second rest before progressing to the below knee hold.

Knee level hold:
- Grip the rescue tool as per the previous holds and lift it to knee height ensuring the tool does not rest on any part of your body.
- The tool must be parallel to the ground and hold for 40 seconds and you may brace your arms on your thighs for this hold.
- Return the tool safely to the ground using the squat or lunge technique.

Candidates will be deemed unsuccessful if:
- the rescue tool is dropped
- the tool rests on any part of your body
- the tool is not held parallel.

This completes Task 3 and the applicant now moves to Task 4, the repeated hose drag.
Task 4: Repeated Hose Drag

A length of hose weighing 11kg, attached to the resistance reel with 33kg of drag resistance, is advanced three times over 30 metre straight course. The purpose is to replicate repeat efforts moving an operational fire fighting hose. The hose will be dragged for 30 metres three times.

Instructions:
- Grip handle attached to hose and place over shoulder.
- Drag (advance) the hose forward 30 metres maintaining an upright position.
- After completing 30 metres hand the hose to the assessor and walk back to the start point.
- Complete two more 30 metres drags.
- You can change shoulders at the start of any lap.

Candidates will be deemed unsuccessful if they:
- fall
- turn their body sideways
- face backwards
- drop the hose.

If any of these happen the candidate will be asked to stop, the hose will return to the start position and the candidates will be asked to start again. Your time will not be reset – but paused as the hose is repositioned.

Stage 2 must be completed in 15 minutes. At the 15 minute mark Stage 3 begins, any time left between the completion of Stage 2 and the 15 minute mark is considered rest and recovery time.
Stage 3:
The two tasks in Stage 3 must be completed in 2 minutes or less.

Task 1: Fire Attack Simulation
A length of hose weighing 11kg, attached to the resistance reel with 27kg of drag resistance, is advanced once over a 30 metre straight course.

Instructions:
- The candidate will adopt a crawling position with the hose over one shoulder and gripping the handle.
- You will be required to advance the hose in a crawling position for 30 metres.

Candidates will be deemed unsuccessful if they:
- turn their body sideways
- face backwards
- move out of a crawling position
- drop the hose.

If any of these happen the candidate will be asked to stop, the hose will return to the start position and the candidates will be asked to start again. Your time will not be reset – but paused as the hose is repositioned.

Upon completion of Task 1 you will move to Task 2.

Task 2: Simulated Fire Fighter Rescue
To start this task, candidates must squat or lunge down and grip the handle straps of a SCBA back plate with 30kg of weight plates and 27kg of drag force, moving it into a vertical position.

Instructions:
- Using your legs to lift, stand up and lift the plate off the ground.
- Move backwards for 10 metre in a squat stance.
- You may stop to adjust your grip, but must ensure the plate is off the ground before you continue.

Candidates will be deemed unsuccessful if they:
- drop the back plate
- fall over
- drag the back plate.

If any of these happen the candidate will be asked to stop, the hose will return to the start position and the candidates will be asked to start again. Your time will not be reset – but paused as the hose is repositioned.

This completes the assessment.