

1965 – Woollen Tunic T63



Fire coat

Features & Benefits:

- Fire coat made from wool fabric
- Uniform styling
- Good heat protection when dry
- Relatively flame resistant

Disadvantages:

- Heavy when wet
- Difficult to clean/absorbs dirt, hydrocarbons and blood borne pathogens

Ensemble specification

Manufactured by Bristol Uniforms to meet first Home Office Standard A1 for firefighter clothing in 1965. At this time firefighter PPE was manufactured using what limited fabrics were available and focused on protecting the wearer from external hazards. There was little, or no, scope for design or comfort considerations.

Trousers

Features & Benefits:

- Wet Legs made from Polyvinylchloride (PVC)
- Waterproof

Disadvantages:

- No heat resistance
- No flame resistance
- Flammable

Some of the basic elements of today's PPE were absent in 1965. In a male dominated public sector organisation there was no provision for female firefighters in shape, styles or sizes. There was no provision, or need in some cases, for extra pockets for radios, torches and other accessories. The same uniforms were worn by every fire brigade in the country – occasionally provision was made for use of a fire brigade's own buttons. Firefighters were expected to maintain their own protective clothing, including washing and repairing their garments.

PVC wet legs



Woollen tunic with PVC wet legs



Nomex coat with PVC wet legs



Early Wessex

2013 – XFLEX™ Structural Firefighter PPE

By 2013, fibre and fabric manufacturers have developed a wide range of natural and man-made fabrics in composite materials, which afford high performance resistance to heat and flame, tear and abrasion resistance. Modern three-layer PPE construction, incorporating a variety of fabrics, enable today's designs to focus on the ergonomics of clothing to provide enhanced flexibility, movement and comfort. Lighter weight constructions also provide enhanced scope to reduce heat stress on firefighters.



Fire coat

Features:

- Double zip flap extends to neck with internal zip guard to protect throat
- Soft knitted inner lining on collar
- Deep return on cuff hem ensures gloves fit well inside sleeve
- Ergonomic three-dimensional articulated elbow
- Hem of sleeve curved over back of hand for additional protection

General

- Reflective tape is breathable and stitched with 'Trimsaver' meta-aramid braid
- Brigade names can be added to the back or on a vertical sleeve graphic on the coat
- 28 sizes – ie seven chest fittings and four height fittings available in both male and female ranges

Trousers

Features:

- H Braces with unique webbing slide adjuster
- Inside hem lined with Neoprene to minimise abrasion from boots
- Fully articulated three-dimensional ergonomic knee shaping which goes through all layers
- Very flexible reinforcement fabric used



Wessex
1990s



Ergotech Action™
2003



XFLEX™ with
ECO-dry 2011