

Notes for the PPE Committee

Note that this meeting was focussed on the concerns of US first responders, Australian users may have different needs/requirements.

Meeting focussed mostly on concerns that emergency responders had regarding the PPE they used during their work.

NIOSH

- NIOSH developing a research agenda for PPE.
 - Conduct a review of current activities (two years)
 - Action plan with 5 year scope, starting implementation > 1y from now.
 - Expanding CBRN hazard lists.
 - Looking to update 42 CFR Part 84 to include more combination respirators.
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Fire Service

- Worries around PFAS/PFOS
 - Focussed on wildland firefighting, need for respirators in bushfires, but used far less commonly than in urban firefighting (not sure if fire PPE is something TGA worry about).
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EMS

- Desire to stratify regulatory requirements between different usage environments.
 - Medical providers worried about
 - Breathability
 - Fluid resistance
 - Thermal stress
 - Tear resistance
 - Viral penetration resistance
 - Integrity after exposure to disinfectants
 - Extended user and re-use
 - EMS had the highest fatality rate due to covid-19 among first responders/medical personnel
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Law Enforcement

- Focussed on non-respiratory/therapeutic PPE (ballistic vests/helmets, bomb squad etc).
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Committee Discussion

- Discussion focussed on NIOSH asking responders what information they would like to see in future studies.

- Worries around hearing loss/firefighting ppe, intersection between PPE and other hazards (such as restriction of sight/sound if wearing masks).
- Expressed issues around verbal communication while wearing PPE.
- Interoperability