



DFES General Circular No: 127/2024

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**HELP US MAKE PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT/CLOTHING (PPE/PPC)
FIT FOR EVERYONE**

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services is an active member of the [Fire and Emergency Champions of Change Group](#), established in 2017 with the support of the Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council (AFAC). I am writing to invite you to participate in a critical project: **Making PPE/PPC Fit for Everyone**.

This group comprises Fire and Emergency Services organisations with staff and volunteers across metropolitan, rural, and regional communities in Australia and New Zealand, who are dedicated to increasing the representation of women and other diverse groups in the sector. This includes frontline, operational, and leadership roles to meet current and future operational needs and ensure the best service to our communities.

Champions of Change coalition is working collectively with these organisations to identify key barriers being faced when accessing gender inclusive and fit-for-purpose PPE/PPC.

I would like to invite you to share your opinions on ensuring PPE/PPC is “fit” for everyone. We are interested in understanding your experiences and challenges related to aspects such as PPE/PPC design, fit, safety, organisational culture, cleaning, and maintenance.

You can contribute in one of two ways:

1. **Complete a Confidential Online Survey:** Share your experiences and insights by filling out the survey [here](#) or scanning the QR code. Please note that the survey will be open until 26 September 2024.





2. Join an Online Consultation facilitated by Champions of Change:

Participate in a group discussion facilitated by Champions of Change Coalition to further explore these issues. Please register via this [link](#) or scan the QR code.

The discussion sessions are scheduled as follows:

- **12 September 2024**, 12:00-1:00pm (AEST): Women, non-binary and gender fluid people.
- **16 September 2024**, 7:00-8:00pm (AEST): Women, non-binary and gender fluid people.
- **18 September 2024**, 12:00-1:00pm (AEST): All genders.



The results from the survey, consultations and further research will be collated into a final report that will be shared with all members identifying the practical actions that ensures PPE/PPC is accessible, functional, gender-inclusive and meets diverse physiological and cultural requirements.

Further information:

- This survey is inclusive of anyone over the age of 18 years in urban firefighting, wildland firefighting, rescue activities, HAZMAT and land management activities in volunteer or career capacities.
- Your participation in this project is completely voluntary. If you do not wish to take part, you do not have to.
- These discussion groups and the survey are confidential. Your responses to the survey will be collated with the responses of all other participants independently by Champions of Change and only a summary of all results will be shared. All data will be stored securely with Champions of Change for the project's duration. There is no identifying data collected or associated with the project.

Your feedback will be invaluable in helping us ensure that PPE/PPC meets the needs of everyone in the Fire and Emergency Services. Thank you in advance for your participation and support in making a meaningful difference.

**DARREN KLEMM AFSM
COMMISSIONER**