



October 2007

## **ADVISORY BULLETIN**

**Re: NFPA 1851, 2008 Edition Standard on Selection, Care and Maintenance of Protective Ensembles for Structural Fire Fighting and Proximity Fire Fighting.  
*Revisions Made to the Standard***

The new 2008 Edition of NFPA 1851 has been published and is now in effect. This Standard has gone through a large revision not the least of which is found in the new chapter 10 “*Retirement, Disposition and Special Incident Procedure*”.

**Section 10.1.2** of this chapter states: “*Structural fire fighting ensembles and ensemble elements shall be retired in accordance with 10.2.1, no more than 10 years from the date the ensembles or ensemble elements were manufactured*”.

**Section 10.2.2** of this chapter states: “*Retired structural fire fighting ensembles and ensemble elements ..... as determined in section 10.1.8 shall be permitted to be used as follows:*

- 1. For training that does not involve live-fire, provided the ensembles and ensemble elements are appropriately marked as being for non live-fire only.*
- 2. As determined by the organization (Fire Department)*

This new addition to the standard will come as a surprise and serious financial concern for many Fire Services. The following will explain Fireservice Management’s official position in dealing with this new section.

Within the Province of Ontario, the requisite Standard of record is CAN/CGSB 155.1-01 “*Fire Fighters’ Protective Clothing Against Heat and Flame*” as well as relevant sections of “*Section 21 Guidance Notes Published by the Ontario Ministry of Labour*”.

NFPA Standards as they relate to Fire Fighting activities and the Fire Services are an Internationally recognized “Standard of NFPA codes, minimum performance standards, recommended practices and guidelines”. As all manufacturers of fire fighter’s protective ensembles and ensemble elements in North America must be NFPA 1971, 2007 edition certified, all garments entering the Canadian market are NFPA 1971 Certified and in Ontario specifically, must be CGSB 155.1 certified and labeled.

**“Notices and Disclaimers Concerning NFPA Documents”** appear on the inside of the cover page of each Standard with one such *notice* stating, *“Anyone using this document should rely on his or her own judgment or, as appropriate, seek the advice of a competent professional in determining the exercise of reasonable care in any given circumstance.”*

As the above referenced information relates to *“Structural fire fighting ensembles and ensemble elements shall be retired in accordance with 10.2.1, no more than 10 years from the date the ensembles or ensemble were manufactured”* the ultimate and final decision of retiring your departments Bunker Suits rests solely with the decision makers within the each Fire Service.

Fireservice Management Ltd., as an Independent Service Provider (ISP) for the cleaning, inspection and repair of Bunker Suits, has a responsibility to its customers of notifying them of relevant changes to industry standards so our customers can make informed decisions.

As an ISP, Fireservice Management is subject to adhering to the **new** Verification Requirements for ISP’s within the Revised 2008 Edition of NFPA 1851 in accordance with fulfilling our functions in cleaning, decontaminating, inspecting, repairing and the record keeping of fire fighters’ Bunker Suits. We can only advise and make recommendations when it comes to imparting information. As is our common practice, we will not make any repairs to garments when the cost effectiveness of such repairs considering the levels and degrees of contamination, the age of the garment or the overall condition of the garment is suspect, until we have contacted a decision maker within the department for final approval to proceed or not. The ultimate and final decision is not ours; it is yours. This includes the issue of the retirement of Bunker Suits.

If there are any questions or further clarification is required, please contact Fireservice Management Ltd. directly.

Sincerely  
Fireservice Management Ltd.