



MONTGOMERY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

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PROPOSAL FOR STRUCTURAL FIREFIGHTING BOOTS

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Proposal: The Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHS) recommends the Globe Supreme 14" Firefighting Boot as the structural firefighting boot for Montgomery County Fire and Rescue. The Globe Supreme 14" Firefighting Boot is recommended based upon the evaluations of MCFRS personnel over the course of a 6-month wear trial where a total of 527 evaluations were completed.

Purpose: Leather Firefighting boots have been issued to MCFRS personnel by contractual agreement since the 1990s. At the time of the initial contract agreement, it was decided that the Pro brand boot would be the issued leather Firefighting boot for MCFRS. In the two decades since the initial agreement, there have been a number of improvements to firefighting boot technology. Also during this time period, a number of other leather firefighting boot manufacturers have entered the market. In spite of these advances, and complaints from personnel regarding issues with comfort, donning/doffing and liner separation, MCFRS has continued issuing the same boot, which is now marketed by Honeywell as the BT 3009. After evaluating several different makes and styles of boots at the 2015 Redmond Symposium, a decision was made by the JHS to move forward with a wear trial comparison of our current boot and 4 new leather firefighting boots.

Evaluation: To evaluate the different leather structural firefighting boots currently available, a group of career and volunteer personnel with boot sizes ranging from 6 to 14 were selected to take part in the wear trial. All personnel attended an initial fitting session to ensure they were wearing a properly sized boot. To facilitate this, representatives from the respective boot's manufacturers were given the opportunity to attend and take part in the fitting sessions. Three of the four new boot manufacturers sent representatives to the fitting sessions. One did not, but sent a sizing set of boots so that personnel could determine their proper size.

The wear trial commenced in March 2016 and personnel were issued a different boot for approximately 4 weeks at a time. Personnel were requested to fill out a daily feedback form on the boot's performance for each working shift, or duty shift in which they were worn. A copy of the daily evaluations and the data collected is attached. The key components that we were evaluating were:

Human Resources

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1. Comfort of the boot
2. Weight of the boot
3. Ability to Don/Doff the boot
4. Liner Separation
5. Quality of boot traction/tread/footbed support
6. Ability of the boot to insulate feet in cold/hot conditions

Findings:

Based upon the data collected from the daily evaluations we found the following for whether personnel would recommend the respective boots evaluated:

- Globe Supreme = 93.6% of the feedback forms collected stated that the evaluator would recommend the boot for MCFRS purchase
- Black Diamond = 58.7% of the feedback forms collected stated that the evaluator would recommend the boot for MCFRS purchase
- Fire Dex FDXL = 33.3% of the feedback forms collected stated that the evaluator would recommend the boot for MCFRS purchase
- Lion Marshall = 15.6% of the feedback forms collected stated that the evaluator would recommend the boot for MCFRS purchase
- Honeywell BT 3009 (Pro) = 8.7% of the feedback forms collected stated that the evaluator would recommend the boot for MCFRS purchase

In addition to the 93.7% recommendation rate given for the Globe Supreme, evaluators also rated several characteristics of the boot using a 1-5 scale (low to high rating). The average scores based off responses received from 125 Globe evaluations are as follows:

Comfort – 4.592 (Black Diamond was second at 3.834)
Weight – 4.192 (Black Diamond was second at 3.705)
Donning/Doffing – 4.612 (Fire Dex was second at 3.619)
Tread/Traction – 4.416 (Black Diamond was second at 3.962)
Footbed Support – 4.313 (Black Diamond was second at 3.955)
Ability to Insulate in Cold conditions – 4.207 (Fire Dex was second at 4.167)

There were also no reported occurrences of liner separation in the Globe feedback forms.

Cost: Per the Logistics Section, the expected contract price of the Globe Supreme will be between \$330, bridging off a contract currently being finalized by Arlington County. Our current boot, the Honeywell 3009 BT, has a contract price of \$350.85.

Implementation: It is recommended that MCFRS begins purchasing the Globe Supreme Firefighting boot as soon as a contract can be secured, and issue them immediately to any personnel who have Structural Firefighting boots that are older than 10 years. For any remaining supply of Honeywell boots, it is recommended that they be issued to any employees/members of MCFRS who are in need of replacement boots prior to the 10-year age cutoff.

Prior to distributing the new Boots, the JHS will publish a summary of the Boots to include any specifics of the Boot as well as a summary of how the Boots were chosen. The document will also specify how the boots shall be maintained and cleaned. The JHS will also meet with the personnel assigned to the Logistics Section to ensure proper sizing is conducted when distributing the Boots.

The Joint Health and Safety Committee would like to thank Chief Goldstein and IAFF Local 1664 President Jeff Buddle for their support of this evaluation of structural firefighting boot.