

# CAL FIRE PHYSICAL/MENTAL STRESS JOB DESCRIPTION



## HEAVY FIRE EQUIPMENT OPERATOR

A DESCRIPTION IS GIVEN BELOW OF THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL STRESSES TO WHICH A HEAVY FIRE EQUIPMENT OPERATOR IS SUBJECTED TO AT CAL FIRE. YOUR JUDGMENT IS NEEDED AS TO THE EMPLOYEE'S CAPACITY TO PERFORM THE REQUIRED DUTIES. IN YOUR CONCLUSION, TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE LONG-RANGE OUTLOOK FOR CONTINUED PERFORMANCE, AND THE EMPLOYEE'S ABILITY TO SAFELY PERFORM THESE DUTIES WITHOUT SIGNIFICANT INCREASED RISK OF INJURY TO SELF OR OTHERS BECAUSE OF MEDICAL CONDITION.

The Heavy Fire Equipment Operator (HFEO) as a specialist in the use and operation of heavy motorized equipment, heavy bulldozers, motor-graders, heavy-duty transports, trucks, and other types of heavy equipment used in fire suppression work so as to best supplement the other fire control forces. The HFEO must be able to judge the capabilities of themselves and the equipment according to the area in which the fire is burning so that the desired fire lines can be constructed with due consideration to safety for firefighters and equipment.

In addition to fireline duties, the HFEO spends considerable time, especially in winter and spring, in the construction and maintenance of forestry roads, hazard reduction, and other project work requiring the operation of heavy equipment. Also, the HFEO maintains a strict automotive preventive maintenance schedule and, under supervision, assists mechanics in making major mechanical repairs to heavy bulldozers, motor-graders, heavy-duty transports, trucks and other types of equipment; and under general direction, performs vehicle maintenance and repair which may include preventative overhaul, welding, limited body repair, and lubricating; maintains other equipment used in fire suppression activity such as chain saws and portable generators, estimates cost of repairs and purchase parts, maintains simple records and written reports of work performed, and trains others in safe practice in the use and repair of heavy equipment and vehicles.

The HFEO must possess the ability to read and use maps; operate and make emergency repairs to heavy motorized equipment in mountainous areas under hazardous fire conditions; maintain cooperative relations with other organizations and agencies; make simple reports, keep simple records, and follow directions.

While responding to an emergency incident, the HFEO may be required to drive up to 10 hours and then immediately be assigned to a fireline for a 12 to 14 hour shift. Should the HFEO be assigned to the night shift, the HFEO would be required to sleep during the day to be ready for the following night shift. Day sleeping, combined with high temperatures (100+ degrees) smoke and noise, makes rest quite difficult to obtain. Normal regularity of meals becomes difficult in these situations due to the times of shift work and fireline duty stress.

Operating heavy equipment on the fireline can be very stressful; but when an emergency requires an immediate response, the HFEO must be able to meet the above demanding stressful situations.

A HFEO must have visual acuity (Snellen) of not less than 20/100 without correction in each eye, corrected to not less than 20/30 in one eye; must have color vision sufficient to correctly identify vehicles and have color vision adequate to successfully perform the duties as assured by the Ishihara Pseudo-Chromatic Plate Test; hearing adequacy within speech frequencies (uncorrected); and full use of both hands and feet. The HFEO must have the necessary strength and agility required for extensive bending, stooping, and squatting, and must have no more than a mild susceptibility to poison oak. The HFEO must be able to work in situations where heat is intense, as well as be able to tolerate heavy smoke, dust, and exposure.

The incumbent may be required to wear respiratory protection equipment (including self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA)). The use of such equipment may place a physiological burden on the incumbent that varies with the type of equipment used, the job and workplace conditions in which the equipment is used, and the medical status of the incumbent. As such, Cal/OSHA requires that the incumbent be annually medically cleared to be fit-tested for respiratory protection equipment. This clearance process consists of a comprehensive medical evaluation including a review of the incumbent's medical history, a complete physical examination, and vision, hearing, spirometry, and exercise treadmill tests.

The incumbent typically is required to perform psychologically stressful and/or physically demanding duties consistent with firefighting, disaster response, and emergency medical response, including working in isolated areas, walking or running on uneven rough terrain, and remaining on duty 24 hours or longer without a break while performing these duties.

### **CATEGORY I - ARDUOUS PHYSICAL WORK**

Duties involve field work requiring physical performance calling for above-average ability, endurance, and superior condition, including occasional demand for extraordinarily strenuous activities in emergencies, under adverse environmental conditions, and over extended periods of time; requires running, walking, difficult climbing, jumping, twisting, bending and lifting over 25 pounds; and the pace of work is typically met by the emergency situation.

THE UNDERSIGNED CERTIFIES THAT HE/SHE HAS READ THE CAL FIRE PHYSICAL/MENTAL STRESS JOB DESCRIPTION FOR THE EMPLOYEE NAMED BELOW AND THAT IN HIS/HER JUDGMENT THE EMPLOYEE HAS THE CAPACITY TO PERFORM THE REQUIRED DUTIES, HAS TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT THE LONG-RANGE OUTLOOK FOR CONTINUED PERFORMANCE, AND THE EMPLOYEE IS ABLE TO SAFELY PERFORM THESE DUTIES WITHOUT SIGNIFICANT INCREASED RISK OF INJURY TO SELF OR OTHERS BECAUSE OF MEDICAL CONDITION.

EMPLOYEE NAME (PRINT)

WORK UNIT

MEDICAL PROVIDER'S NAME (PRINT)

DATE

MEDICAL PROVIDER'S SIGNATURE

ADDRESS (PRINT)

TELEPHONE