Turnout Gear: a Firefighterâ€™s Uniform

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Turnout gear, also known as bunker gear, refers to the protective outfit worn by firefighters for their safety during disaster control operations. Firefighting is a tough job that comes with a sea of possibilities of seriously injuring a firefighter.. Bunker Gear includes helmet, coat, trouser, shoes, gloves and personal protective equipments like rope, torch, respirators, gas masks or other essential equipments. To provide maximum safety to the firefighters, NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) has specified some requirements that a bunker gear has to conform to.

Turnout clothing or on turnout gear has 3 layers: An outer shell, a moisture barrier and a thermal barrier. Between two layers there are air pockets. Trousers are designed with reinforced knees. Coats and trousers have oversized pockets and straps to carry necessary equipments. Advanced Nomex/Kevlar blend material is used to make coats and trousers to make those outfits flame resistant, heat resistant and water proof. The shoes are designed with leather or rubber with Boron Steel toe protection. These are slip- proof and puncture proof. Helmets are made of non conductive, strong material to protect firefighterâ€™s head from falling debris and other possible injuries. The helmets can have a face guard or shield. Gloves are made of rip-proof materials like Kevlar and are lightweight to allow the manual dexterity to operate various equipments. A protective flash hood or Nomex hood is worn by firefighters to protect their ears, neck and other parts which are not protected by their masks or helmets.

Bunker gear varies widely according to the intensity of the situation and government specification. These outfits come with instruction guidelines which should be perused beforehand. Cleaning, maintenance, alterations to these outfits should be done by professionals only. There are many business houses which offer professional services for inspection, cleaning, maintenance and repairing of on turnout gear.

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