NFPA 1851

A Fire Department’s Perspective
Orange County Fire Authority

- Irvine, CA
- JPA with 22 cities
- Geographic area of 550 square miles
- 1,072 career fire fighters
- 62 fire stations
- 1.4 mil. residents
Service Center (SVC)

- Order all PPE and outfit personnel
- Maintain a loaner program
- Perform routine cleaning
- Perform routine inspections
- Perform basic repair
Service Center (SVC)

- 15 full-time employees
- 1 employee oversees PPE program
- Several other employees assist in cleaning, inspection and repairs
- Training conducted by Lion Apparel on proper inspection and what repairs can be made in-house
Protective Ensemble Maintenance Program

- Individuals screen PPE
- SVC provide loaner PPE to personnel
- SVC conducts routine cleaning
  - Use extractor & dryer to clean sweat and dirt
- Any PPE contaminated or potentially contaminated with hazardous materials is sent to ISP
Protective Ensemble Maintenance Program

- SVC performs routine inspection and repair
  - Repair outer shell but not liner
  - Repair small holes
  - Replace worn Velcro, buttons or snaps
- ISP repairs or replaces inner layers and zippers
Challenges to Conforming with NFPA 1851

- Advanced cleaning, inspection, test procedures, repair, and verification
  - Difficult and costly to train in-house staff
  - Costly to use ISPs for advanced cleaning, inspection, and repair
  - Local ISPs won’t perform advanced cleaning for all hazardous materials

- Retirement
  - 10 years
Why we Don’t Follow NFPA 1851

1. Historical Information
   - Ensembles over 10 years that pass advanced inspection by ISP
   - No serious injuries, illnesses, or near miss incidents caused by a PPE failure
   - Serious injury, illness, or near miss investigations have shown PPE performed as expected
Why we Don’t Follow NFPA 1851

2. NFPA 1851 Committee Structure
   – Technical Correlating Committee
   – Technical Committee
Why we Don’t Follow NFPA 1851

3. Lack of data to support the requirements written into NFPA 1851
Why we Don’t Follow NFPA 1851

4. Don’t feel it’s financially responsible to implement NFPA 1851
Why we Don’t Follow NFPA 1851

- Asbestos example
  - Seal Beach Fire
    - Turnouts bagged, tagged, and sent in for Advanced Cleaning
    - ISP cleaned turnouts
    - Certified Industrial Hygienist microvacuum testing
    - Turnouts were contaminated with asbestos after cleaning

- ISPs will not accept turnouts
Thank You