



*USNORTHCOM's Wildland  
Firefighting (WFF)*

**Concept of Operations**  
(CONOPS)

(as of May 2010)

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## **References:**

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- c. Memorandum of Understanding between the Departments of Defense, Agriculture, and the Interior, 27 Jun 2005, (a.k.a. Wildland Firefighting MOU); Modification Number 01, 3 Apr 06
- d. DOD Directive 3025.1, Military Support to Civil Authorities, 15 Jan 93
- e. CJCS STANDING DSCA EXORD, Aug 09
- f. USNORTHCOM OPORD 01-10 Operations Within the USNORTHCOM AOR
- g. AFDD 2-10, Homeland Security Operations, 21 Mar 06
- h. AFI 11-2C-130 Vol. 1, C-130 Aircrew Training, 19 Jul 06
- i. AFI 11-2C-130 Vol. 3, C-130 Operations Procedures, 14 Mar 06
- j. NIFC 2008 MAFFS Operating Plan
- k. AMC MAFFS Concept of Execution (Phoenix Forest), 30 Jun 05
- l. USNORTHCOM Standing EXORD for DSCA Operations, Oct 09
- m. Appendix 20 to Annex C, USNORTHCOM CONPLAN 3501 Wildland Firefighting Operations, 24 April 2008
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- o. Financial Management Regulation (FMR), 7000.14-R, Volume 11a, Sept 1997 (with changes through May 2001)
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## **BACKGROUND**

### **1. Overview**

1.1. The Commander, US Northern Command (CDRUSNORTHCOM) provides Title 10 resources, and coordinates with the National Guard (NG) Title 32 forces, to the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) in support of Wildland Firefighting (WFF) operations in the continental United States (CONUS), the U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and Alaska (AK).

1.2. NIFC coordinates the federal response to wildland fires and support to other disasters and is the nation's logistical and support center. NIFC is a consortium of federal agencies consisting of the US Department of Agriculture's (USDA) US Forest Service (USFS), Department of the Interior members including the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), National Park Service (NPS), National Weather Service (NWS), and Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS), it also includes the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), and National Association of State Foresters (NASF). NIFC relies on civilian land and aerial firefighting capability as a primary means of support and requests DOD assistance when additional support is needed. NG, Reserve, and Active Duty forces have historically provided firefighting support when requested.

1.3. As shown in figure 1, wildland fires are initially reported to a local agency dispatch office, which responds by sending firefighters, equipment and supplies to the fire. Once the local assets are exhausted, the local agency will request assistance from the state. State assets could include NG in State Active Duty (SAD) status, an Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) with another state, or a FEMA Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG). If the fire grows beyond the capability of local and state agencies, the nearest of 11 Geographic Area Coordination Centers (GACC) is contacted. The GACC locates and dispatches additional resources from its geographic area. When fires in a geographic area strain GACC resources, the National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) is called. The NICC dispatches equipment, aircraft, personnel, and supplies across the U.S., and sometimes around the world, based on what's available and closest to the incident. If the NICC determines that military support may be needed, the NICC will contact the National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC) within NIFC whose membership consists of Chief, Division of Fire Operations, BLM; Fire Director, NASF; Assistant Director for Wildland Fire Operations, USFS; Director, Branch of Fire Management, BIA; Chief, Branch of Fire Management, FWS; Wildland Fire Program Manager, USFA; Chief, Division of Fire and Aviation, NPS; and other representatives from the NICC, DOD liaison, International liaison, Predictive Services and other support staff, as required. The NMAC will make the decision for the use of DOD assets and NIFC will submit request for assistance (RFA) through the Defense Coordinating Official (DCO) to USNORTHCOM.

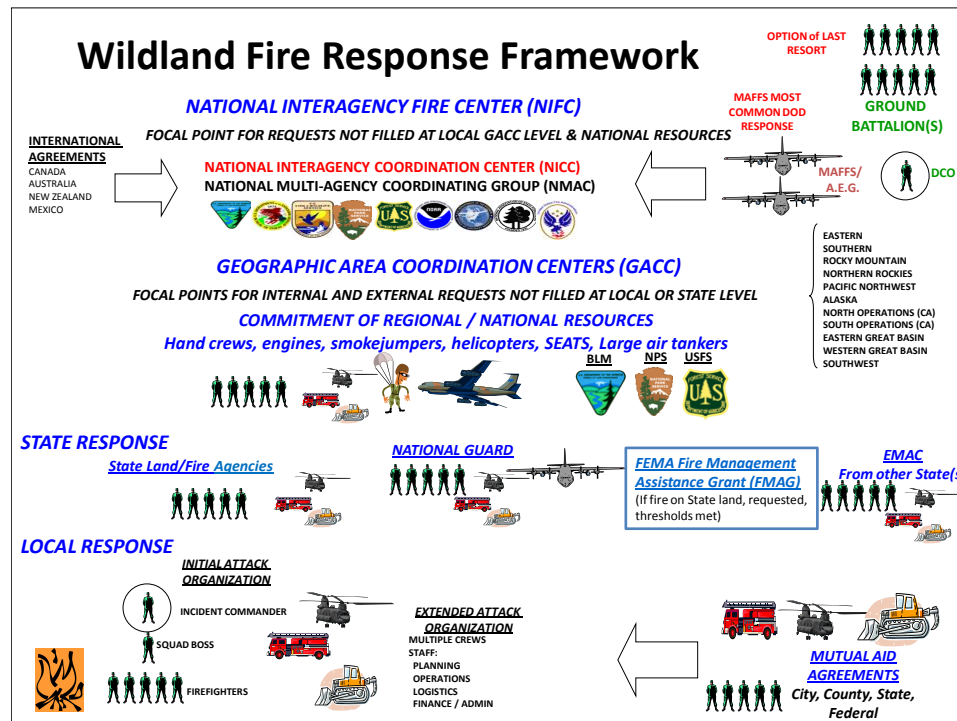


Figure 1 – Fire Response Framework

1.4. There are four military airlift wings that support the Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System (MAFFS) mission. These wings are the primary force providers for the MAFFS mission due to extensive experience and have been specifically identified in the WFF MOU (ref c) for this mission. These four military airlift wings will supply pre-identified aircraft, crews,

maintenance, and support personnel required to execute this mission. All personnel will have met the certification requirements to both fly and support this mission as spelled out by the USFS(ref j). Although the USFS and Aero Union own the actual MAFFS equipment, each individual unit will be expected to deploy with the MAFFS equipment and bring it to the deployed location. Of these four wings, three are NG and one is an AF Reserve unit (see figure 2). The 146 Air Wing (AW) California Air National Guard (CA ANG) recently converted to the C-130J model. The new Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System II (MAFFS II) testing has been completed on both the C-130H and C-130J models. The MAFFS II system will be replacing the MAFFS legacy system and provides better coverage level capability and reliability. It is anticipated that all MAFFS II units will be operational in 2010. The MAFFS legacy units will still be available for the fire season as a backup to the MAFFS II units in the event of any difficulties for the first year of MAFFS II use.

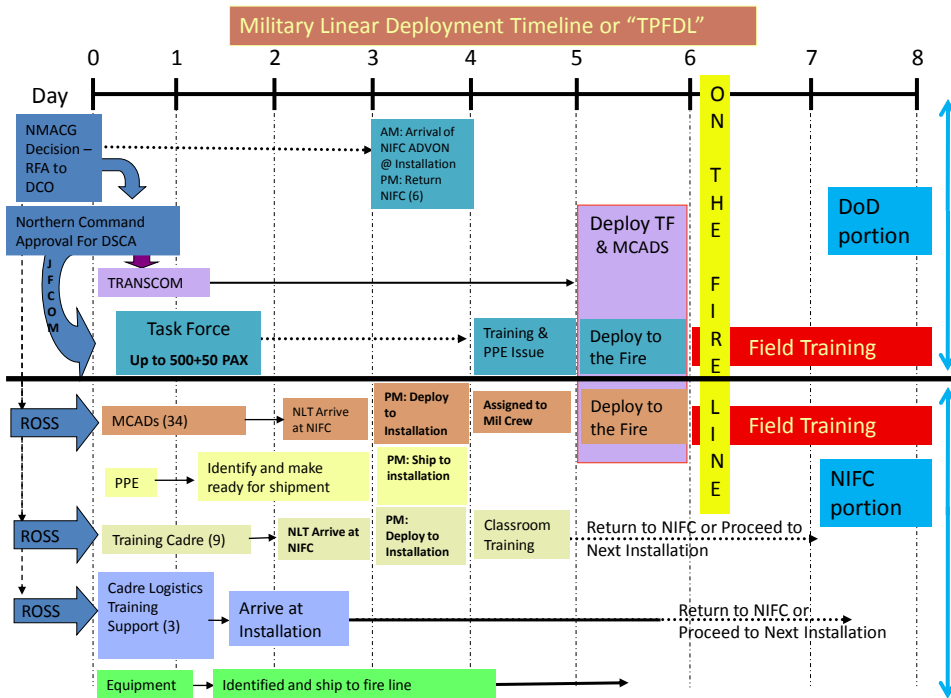
<b>Available MAFFS Airlift Wings</b>	
—	<b>302 AW (AFRC), Colorado Springs, CO</b>
•	<b>C-130H</b>
—	<b>153 AW (ANG), Cheyenne, WY</b>
•	<b>C-130H</b>
—	<b>145 AW (ANG), Charlotte, NC</b>
•	<b>C-130H</b>
—	<b>146 AW (ANG), Channel Islands, CA</b>
•	<b>C-130J</b>

**Figure 2 – MAFFS Capable Wings**

1.5. NIFC may request DOD helicopters with Bambi Buckets for water bucket drop operations supporting WFF efforts. Upon being sourced by DOD and approximately one week prior to being utilized on a fire incident, NIFC will certify the sourced unit to national standards. The Army National Guard (ARNG) has the preponderance of helicopter forces throughout CONUS, Puerto Rico, and AK that can respond quickly to a NIFC request. In Southwest CONUS, Title 10 DOD helicopters may be utilized as the units have Mutual Aid Agreements with the local fire agency. Refer to ref n, particularly chapter 70 for NIFC’s guidance and pilot training and qualification for DOD helicopter operations. In accordance with (IAW) ref n, the supported federal or state firefighting agency will provide a qualified Helicopter Manager (HELM) for each four military helicopters deployed in support of fire suppression. The HELM is the direct liaison between the military flight crews and the incident air operations organization.

1.6. NIFC may request DOD ground WFF support. Traditionally, the requirement is for one or more NIFC qualified battalion-sized force consisting of 25 crews of 20 personnel each (500 pax) and a 60 person headquarters/support element. If the mission dictates, NIFC may tailor the ground task requirement to 10 crews of 20 personnel each (200 pax) and a 50 person

headquarters/support element. IAW ref n, NIFC will provide qualification training and certification one week prior to being utilized on a fire incident once DOD has notified the unit(s) (see figure 3). The length of mobilization for any battalion or tailored support will not exceed 30 days with the first day of assignment beginning with classroom training. DOD forces can be reassigned within or to another geographic area if the situations warrant, unless preempted by a priority defense mission.



**Figure 3 – Ground Force Training Timeline**

1.7. NIFC and other agencies may request DOD Incident Awareness and Assessment (IAA) support. DOD can offer unmanned aerial systems (UAS) and manned aerial assets that provide full motion video, thermal imaging, and broad area assessments. DOD assets available include the Predator, Global Hawk, P-3, U-2, RC-26 (ANG), SH-60, and Civil Air Patrol (CAP) aircraft depending on the requirement and capabilities requested. IAA is typically provided to the GACC, Incident Management Teams, and city/county Emergency Operations Centers. During the 2007 Southern California wildfires DOD aerial assets provided overhead support to firefighters, identifying hot spots inside and outside containment areas enabling firefighters to divert resources to critical areas thus controlling and containing fires faster and more efficiently.

1.8. NIFC-qualified DOD civilian firefighters, when authorized by military department secretaries, may volunteer to participate in NIFC WFF operations. Prior to deployment of identified personnel, the applicable military department secretaries will notify supported Combatant Commanders (CCDRs) of the approved requests, the number of personnel and equipment to be deployed, and the duration of support. CCDRs will be notified and will maintain situational awareness.

## **2. Scope**

2.1. The purpose of this CONOPS is to describe the timely, safe, effective, and efficient utilization of DOD forces and assets. This CONOPS focuses on the wildland fire threat. USNORTHCOM, in coordination with NIFC, Joint Staff, the National Guard Bureau (NGB), and United States Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) developed a plan for the wildland fire season (normally 1 May through 31 Oct (30 Nov for California)) in the event of a NIFC RFA.

2.2. CDRUSNORTHCOM's defined firefighting area of operation (AO).

2.2.1. Aerial WFF AO. For aerial operations, CDRUSNORTHCOM defines the firefighting AO as the area in which water buckets or MAFFS operations are supportable from the designated base support installation (BSI)/beddown location as identified in the NIFC RFA. Firefighting operations that cause a change in BSI/beddown location for the helicopter water bucket or C-130 MAFFS aircraft, support personnel and equipment is considered a new requirement. In this situation, the primary agency must submit an amendment to the original RFA or a new RFA as appropriate. Upon validation of the RFA, CDRUSNORTHCOM may grant reposition approval after coordination with NIFC, Joint Force Air Component Commander (JFACC), CDRUSTRANSCOM, military department secretaries and/or the commanders of participating NG and Reserve units.

2.2.2. Ground WFF AO. For areas where ground military forces are committed, CDRUSNORTHCOM defines the firefighting AO as the national forest, park, wildlife refuge, reservation, or BLM district jurisdiction with the incident where ground forces are or will be deployed.

# **OPERATIONS**

## **1. Introduction**

1.1. This CONOPS is intended to provide a concept for timely, safe, effective, and efficient preparation of DOD assets in anticipation of a NIFC RFA supporting WFF efforts. While DOD has a long history of supporting NIFC following RFAs, the 2007 and 2008 California fires demonstrated the need for critical DOD forces and equipment to be prepared for a heightened response posture in anticipation of devastating fire conditions during the critical fire season.

## **2. Mission**

2.1. When directed, Commander USNORTHCOM conducts WFF operations within the 48 contiguous States, the District of Columbia, AK, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands in support of the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC). Additionally, CDRUSNORTHCOM anticipates requirements and coordinates with NG forces to provide DOD resources in support of NIFC to execute WFF operations in CONUS, AK, and US territories within the USNORTHCOM area of responsibility (AOR) in order to save lives and protect property and the environment.

2.2. The Secretaries of Defense, Interior, and Agriculture have agreed to provide mutual support in employing MAFFS resources against wildland fires (ref c). When the firefighting requirements exceed civilian contractor and USFS capabilities, or as determined by the Primary Agency (PA) in accordance with the Economy Act, NIFC will request support from DOD. A DCO assigned to USNORTHCOM will validate the RFA, CDRUSNORTHCOM will approve the RFA (ref e CAT II forces only) and notify the Joint Director of Military Support (JDOMS) at the Joint Staff of RFA validation and mission execution per ref e. NIFC RFA for non CAT II forces such as ground forces will be sent via NMCC to and approved by Secretary of Defense (SECDEF). The Joint Staff will then issue an execute order (EXORD).

2.3. IAW ref e, CDRUSNORTHCOM is authorized to conduct WFF support of NIFC upon approving a validated NIFC RFA. CDRUSNORTHCOM will deploy assigned and allocated forces (ref e Category 1) to support the event. For WFF missions, this will consist of the DCO and Defense Coordinating Element (DCE). CDRUSNORTHCOM is authorized to coordinate directly with force providers to source pre-identified resources, Category 2, and place these forces on a 24-hour prepare to deploy order (PTDO) status and or deploy the forces upon Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) and SECDEF notification. After CJCS and SECDEF notification, CDRUSNORTHCOM can employ the ref e Category 2 forces upon receipt of a validated and approved NIFC RFA. This process is illustrated in figure 4 below.

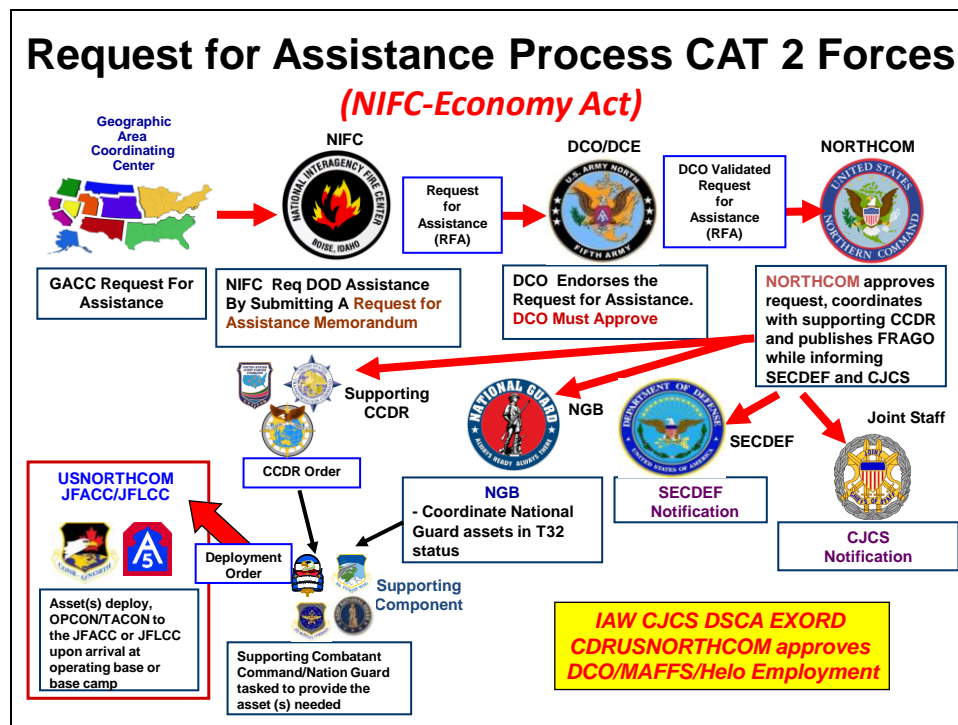
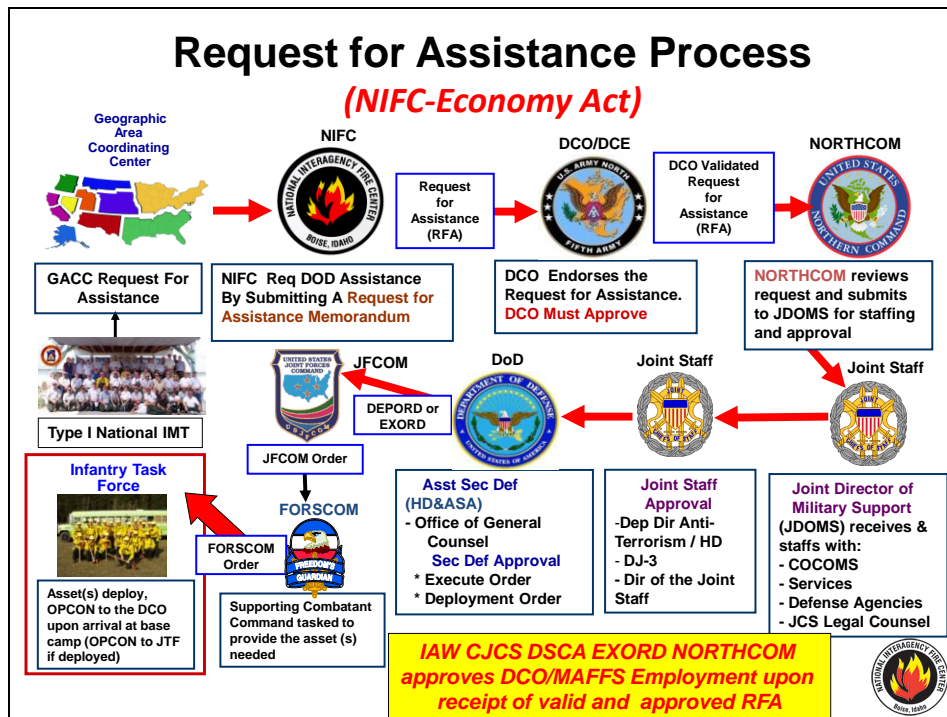


Figure 4 – RFA Process for DSCA EXORD CAT 2 Forces

2.4. IAW ref e and depicted in figure 5, CDRUSNORTHCOM will submit a request for forces (RFF) for forces not identified as CAT 1 or 2 to the Joint Staff (JS). JDOMS will coordinate the RFF with force providing CCDRs and staff for SECDEF approval. Upon



SECDEF approval, the JS will task appropriate force provider to provide forces to CDRUSNORTHCOM. The force provider's supporting component will issue a deployment order and USNORTHCOM will issue an EXORD or fragmentary order (FRAGO).



**Figure 5 – RFA Process for DSCA EXORD Non-Cat 1 or 2 Forces**

2.5. CDRUSNORTHCOM will coordinate with the NGB for NG WFF assets. The NG can provide water bucket capable rotary wing, ground firefighting personnel, IAA assets, and C-130 MAFFS capable aircraft.

### 3. Intent

3.1. Purpose: Execute rapid and effective support to NIFC to lessen and mitigate the effects of wildland fires, and to maintain public confidence and support for Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA) operations.

#### 3.2. Key Tasks:

3.2.1. Provide safe, responsive, and reliable WFF support to NIFC.

3.2.2. Integrate and maintain unity of effort with participating federal agencies, Title 10 military assets, and NG forces under command and control (C2) of their respective governor.

3.2.3. Actively coordinate and execute public affairs operations.

3.2.4. Execute effective C2 of the national WFF efforts in anticipation of requests for DOD support.

3.2.5. Maintain continuous situational awareness of deployed DOD resources in support of WFF operations.

3.2.6. Ensure DOD forces receive appropriate pre-mission certification and personal protective equipment (PPE) to provide for their health and safety while deployed, and meet federal regulatory requirements for support prior to employment.

3.3. End State:

3.3.1. Validated and approved RFAs are processed and employment missions accurately assessed as completed.

3.3.2. DOD forces returned to service component control.

3.3.3. Public confidence in USNORTHCOM DSCA and the NG is maintained throughout WFF operations.

#### **4. Task Organization**

4.1. Components/Supporting Service Commands

<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>COMMANDER</u>
US Air Forces North	CDRAFNORTH
US Army North	CDRARNORTH
US Fleet Forces	USFF
US Marine Forces North	COMMARFORNORTH

4.2. Subordinate Commands

<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>COMMANDER</u>
Joint Task Force Alaska	CJTF-AK

4.3. Supporting Commands

<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>COMMANDER</u>
US Joint Forces Command	CDRUSJFCOM

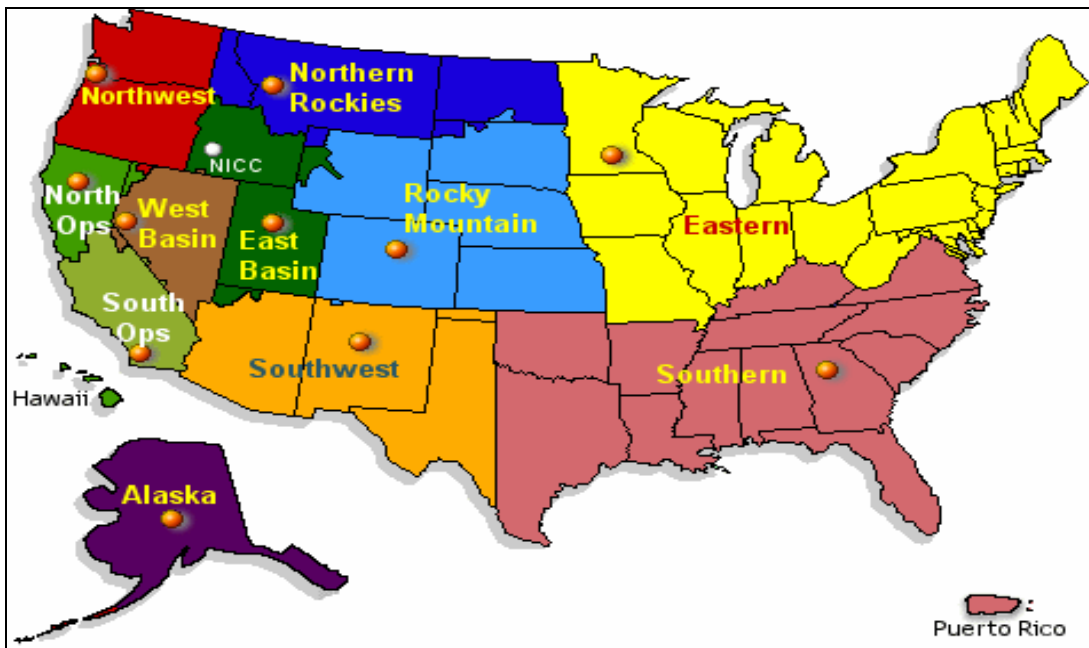
US Pacific Command	CDRUSPACOM
US Special Operations Command	CDRUSSOCOM
US Strategic Command	CDRUSSTRATCOM
US Transportation Command	CDRUSTRANSCOM

4.4. Coordinating Agencies

<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>COMMANDER</u>
National Guard Bureau	Chief, NGB
National Interagency Coordination Center	Manager, NICC

**5. Situation**

5.1. Historically, NIFC has requested DOD support early in the season before NIFC contracted support is fully operational or later in the season when NIFC resources are fully committed. Additionally, NIFC has requested DOD support in Oct and Nov in support of southern California wildfires. Generally the fire season begins in southeast U.S. through south central and then into northwest U.S. (see figure 6). NIFC has a robust complement of certified ground firefighters and a mix of fixed and rotary wing aircraft (see figure 7) that are available nationally. The amount of resources change slightly each year based on NIFC’s predicted need.



**Figure 6 – GACC Areas**

<b>Type Aircraft:</b>	<b>Number (up to):</b>
NIFC contracted large air tankers (LAT)	19
NIFC contracted very large air tankers (VLAT)	2
CA state owned	22
MN contracted CL-215	2
OR contracted DC 6	2
AK contracted DC 6	2
NIFC Type 1 rotary wing exclusive use	26
NIFC Type1 rotary wing call when needed (CWN)	62
NIFC Type 2 rotary wing exclusive use	51
NIFC Type 2 rotary wing (CWN)	83
NIFC single engine air tankers (SEATS) exclusive use	24
NIFC single engine air tankers (SEATS) CWN	56
NIFC aerial supervision King Air 90 aircraft	21
DOD MAFFS capable C-130	8

**Figure 7 – Aviation Assets (based on 2010 assets)**

5.2. Immediate Response. Refs d and q (DODD 3025.dd will replace ref d upon approval) outlines Immediate Response Authority. In response to requests for assistance, commanders are authorized to provide support of civil authorities for WFF in the immediate vicinity of their respective installations to save lives, prevent human suffering, and mitigate great property damage, under imminently serious conditions. Unit commanders performing Immediate Response will inform the National Military Command Center (NMCC) and provide a copy to the NORAD and USNORTHCOM Command Center (N2C2). After 72 hours of employment, respective military departments will coordinate continued operations with CDRUSNORTHCOM.

5.3. Mutual Aid Agreements. In accordance with Title 52, Section 1856a, and ref r each agency head charged with the duty of providing fire protection for any property of the United States may enter into agreements with local firefighting organizations to provide mutual aid in providing “fire protection.” Statute allows for the provision of the following support assets:

5.3.1. Fire fighting.

5.3.2. Emergency services, including basic medical support, basic and advanced life support.

5.3.3. Hazardous material containment and confinement.

5.3.4. Special rescue events involving vehicular and water mishaps, and trench, building, and confined space extractions.

## **6. Operational Restraints**

6.1. USNORTHCOM has no legal authority to initiate DSCA operations without the approval of the President or SECDEF and an approved RFA. Per ref e, SECDEF and CJCS notification required prior to employment of forces upon receipt of validated and approved RFA.

6.2. USNORTHCOM does not have C2 of NG crews and support personnel in SAD status. USNORTHCOM only has coordinating authority of NG crews and support personnel in Title 32 status. For SAD and Title 32 forces, the Governor retains control of these forces.

6.3. USNORTHCOM does not have forces assigned to conduct aerial or land WFF support operations.

## **7. Assumptions**

7.1. The following assumptions are used in preparing this CONOPS:

7.1.1. MAFFS II is available for C-130H and C-130J model aircraft.

7.1.2. Timely requests from the states or Geographic Area Coordination Centers (GACCs) to NICC for WFF support.

7.1.3. USFS has pre-coordinated with retardant vendor and retardant mixing plant contractor for DOD use.

7.1.4. USFS MAFFS liaison officer and MAFFS qualified lead plane(s) and pilot(s) are available.

7.1.5. NIFC will conduct “just in time” training of DOD helicopter and ground forces supporting NIFC RFAs.

7.1.6. USNORTHCOM will not provide funding for WFF missions. All support to NIFC is performed under the Economy Act. Support for WFF operations is executed on a reimbursable basis under the authorities and procedures in ref o.

## **8. Available Forces**

8.1. The four mission capable MAFFS Wings (302 AW, CO Air Force Reserve Command (AFRC); 153 AW, WY ANG; 145 AW, NC ANG; and 146 AW, CA ANG) will provide two C-130 MAFFS aircraft each. Other required assets will be determined as the fire season progresses based on needs of the users and approved RFAs.

8.2. USJFCOM, USPACOM, or other force providers will provide helicopter, IAA, and ground firefighting capability as directed by the SECDEF.

8.3. USARNORTH pre-designates the Region X DCO/DCE to serve as the primary DCO/DCE for NIFC operations.

## **9. Implementation Strategy**

9.1. The N2C2, located within USNORTHCOM, will monitor demands on civilian assets (air tankers, helicopters, ground crews, etc.) and projected risk in order to identify windows for issuance of a FRAGO to USNORTHCOM Operations Order (OPORD) 01-XX for PTDO or deploy orders IAW ref e. The USNORTHCOM embedded permanent Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officer (EPLO) at NIFC will provide situational awareness and notice of impending RFAs. Upon notice of a pending RFA from NIFC, CDRUSNORTHCOM will coordinate with NG, AFRC, and other force providers to place appropriate capable forces on PTDO or deploy them as the situation dictates.

9.2. USNORTHCOM conducts WFF operations in six phases per refs f and m.

9.2.1. Phase 0. Phase 0 is continuous situational awareness and preparedness. The Shaping Phase sets the conditions for the successful execution of DOD response for WFF. USNORTHCOM will maintain situational awareness through interagency coordination and monitoring the current wildland fire situation. During this phase, training for MAFFS crews is conducted and coordination is made for installations to be used as mobilization bases or MAFFS operating bases. Coordination is conducted with NIFC for the pre-positioning of MAFFS assets and slurry/flame retardant. The Army Service Component will identify potential military firefighting battalion (MFB) level units for possible employment. Per ref e, CDRUSNORTHCOM has authority to deploy and redeploy Title 10 MAFFS assets based on NIFC requests upon coordination with supporting CCDR and notification to OSD and Joint Staff. The following WFF situational Commanders Critical Information Requirements (CCIRs) keep CDRUSNORTHCOM informed on the potential for WFF missions:

9.2.1.1. WFF CCIR 1. Have large wildland fires been reported in the DSCA AO?

9.2.1.2. Has NIFC increased its preparedness level to Level III or higher?

9.2.1.3. Has the President declared a national emergency as a result of wildland fires?

9.2.1.4. Are there impending threats to the Defense Industrial Base or DOD critical infrastructure to include communications and communications nodes as a result of wildland fires?

9.2.1.5. Are there impending threats to transportation infrastructure (Road, Rail, Air) as a result of wildland fires?

9.2.1.6. Has NIFC submitted a request for DOD assistance for wildland fire fighting?


9.2.2. Phase I. Phase I begins with the identification of a potential WFF mission (NIFC criteria for ordering MAFFS or DOD ground firefighters are shown in figures 8 and 9 respectively), or when directed by SECDEF. Actions during this phase include, but are not limited to: pre-positioning of MAFFS assets, identification of a JFACC for control of air operations, deployment of a DCO/DCE when requested by NIFC, designation of DOD

installations for use as BSI or MAFFS operating bases, identifying, training and equipping MFB (Note: MFB training requires 7 days). During Staging Phase, coordination with NIFC continues.

### **NIFC Criteria for Ordering MAFFS**

*The following criteria are indicators of developing situations that would require activation of one or more MAFFS units. No set number of the indicators must be met, however generally 80% or more should be met.*

- **Required ( must be met), criteria met =** ✓
  - ✘ Commercial air tanker fleet is committed or not readily available.
- **Additional considerations, criteria met =** ✓
  - ✘ At PL 4 or 5 in 2 or more Geographic Areas
  - ✘ Phase 2: Interim flight and duty limitations have been initiated.
  - ✘ Avail comm'l air tanker fleet is averaging 6+ flight hrs daily for 3 consecutive days.
  - ✘ Response time on commercial air tankers is excessive due to multiple critical areas.
  - ✘ Heavy initial attack activity anticipated over next 14 days.
  - ✘ Heavy initial attack occurring in three or more Geographic Areas.
  - ✘ At PL 4 or higher nationally.
  - ✘ Initial attack is occurring in fuel types in which MAFFS are effective (e.g. grass-sage).
  - ✘ 80% of available Type 1 and 2 helicopters are assigned.
  - ✘ Fire activity conducive to deploying MAFFS at a single base (for cost & pers efficiency).
  - ✘ High demand for comm'l aircraft expected due to predicted weather events / fire activity.
  - ✘ One or more states have activated MAFFS.
  - ✘ Additional equipment clauses of contracts activated (if equipment is available).
  - ✘ Initial Attack success rate is low.




**Figure 8 – NIFC MAFFS Ordering Criteria**

### **NIFC Criteria for Ordering Military Ground Firefighters**

*The decision to supplement the National WFF workforce with one or more military battalions is influenced by many factors. The following criteria have been established by the NIFC Fire Directors :*

- **Required (all must be met), criteria met = X**
  - + National PL 4 or 5. Activation at 4 only occurs if upgrade to 5 is imminent
  - + 95% or higher commitment of Type 2 crews
  - + 30+ days remain until "historic" season-ending events in most involved GACCs
- **Additional considerations, criteria met = X**
  - + Ability to fill Type 2 crew orders is minimal
  - + 100% commitment of available Type 1 crews
  - + 90% or higher commitment of Type 1, 2 and NIMO teams
  - + Two or more Geographic Areas at PL5
  - + Two or more fires nationally have 2000+ personnel assigned.
  - + Five or more fires nationally have significant WUI with evacuations and are drawing heavily on resources.
  - + Required logistical support (caterer and shower) available.
  - + One or more large fires have been identified with camp space for military.
  - + Very high to extreme fire conditions expected to persist in two or more GACCs
  - + All-hazard events are drawing down some civilian firefighting resources
  - + Cost comparison shows military assignment more efficient than int'l crews.
  - + Overhead available to support military deployment
  - + Candidate fire: Suitable for deployment of 25 crews for 30 days



**Figure 9 – NIFC Military Ground Force Ordering Criteria**

9.2.3. Phase II. Phase II begins with the main response force deployment. During this phase, C2 assets and response forces deploy to the affected areas and prepare to conduct WFF operations. USNORTHCOM assumes tactical control (TACON) or operational control (OPCON) of Title 10 forces and exercises coordinating authority with Title 32 forces as they arrive in the affected area. Rules for the Use of Force (RUF) are established and Liaison officers are employed. NIFC conducts certifications for DOD helicopter and ground firefighting supporting forces.

9.2.4. Phase III. Phase III begins when WFF response operations commence in support of NIFC. Supporting units (MAFFS or Ground Unit) report status to USNORTHCOM and maintain a common operational picture of current and future operations. Report the status of missions, personnel and equipment status and costs associated with operations. Begin transition planning.

9.2.5. Phase IV. Stabilization begins as fires are contained and military support can be pulled off the fire line. No further requests for DOD assistance are anticipated and transition criteria are established.

9.2.6. Phase V. Transition will be conducted incrementally as NIFC can assume operational control for any continued WFF operations. Units are redeployed back to home stations and parent organization assumes OPCON as soon as units depart the AO. Situational awareness and a common operational picture are maintained throughout the transition phase. All units capture lessons learned and submit cost expenditures for reimbursement.

9.3. Accurate situational awareness of the fire situation and timely RFAs for WFF support will enable USNORTHCOM to proactively and appropriately posture DOD WFF forces in coordination with appropriate agencies.

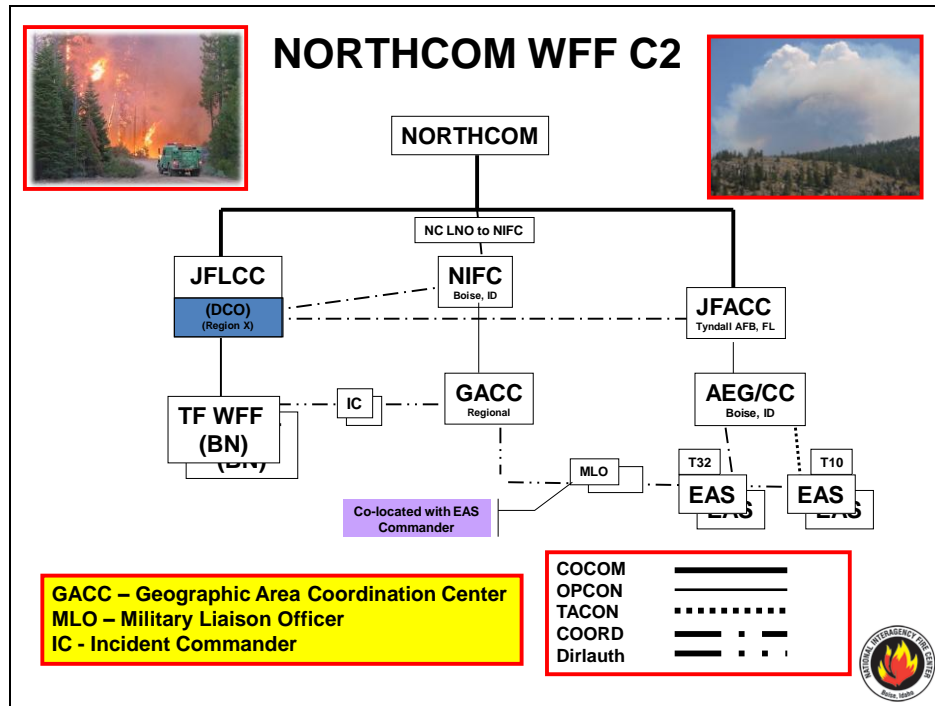
## **10. Coordination/Support, Command and Control Strategy**

10.1. WFF efforts begin with local response for initial attack and through Mutual Aid Agreements or immediate response. Local authorities will request state support when the event stresses their resources. The state response will consist of state owned and or contracted resources, NG resources, and state-to-state agreements. The state will identify requirements and forward request(s) for federal assistance for WFF through the GACC. The GACC has both Federal interagency and state agency representatives. For national federal WFF assets, the GACC will forward request to the NICC who coordinates with NIFC if DOD assets are required. If national air tanker resources are limited or unavailable, NIFC will request DOD MAFFS capable aircraft.

10.2. CDRUSNORTHCOM is the supported CCDR for WFF support to NIFC. CDRUSTRANSCOM is the supporting CCDR for MAFFS certified aircrews and support personnel. CDRUSJFCOM and CDRUSPACOM are supporting CCDRs for helicopter and ground support. CDRUSSTRATCOM is the supporting CCDR for IAA support. CDRUSNORTHCOM will exercise OPCON and/or TACON over approved Title 10 and Title 5



(DOD Federal Employees), forces supporting WFF operations upon arrival to the area of operations. OPCODE/TACON is further delegated to the JFACC. USNORTHCOM and the JFACC have Coordinating Authority with the NGB and MAFFS capable ANG Wings for appropriate Title 32 WFF support. NG forces remain under the C2 of their governors unless federalized.



**Figure 10 – WFF Command and Control**

10.3. USNORTHCOM’s EPLO advises NIFC on military resources and capabilities, and facilitates coordination between NIFC and DOD authorities. The EPLO works under the TACON/direction of the Region X DCO, or designated alternate, and provides situation reports.

10.4. Commander ARNORTH is the USNORTHCOM designated theater Joint Force Land Component Commander (JFLCC) minus the JTF-AK joint operations area (JOA). Commander US Army Alaska (USARAK) is the designated JFLCC (JFLCC-AK) in the JTF-AK JOA. The JFLCC provides theater support to CDRUSNORTHCOM for ground support in conducting WFF operations. The JFLCC will coordinate, as necessary, with the ARNG for ground support.

10.5. The DCO may be supported by the DCE, which is an administrative and support staff element. The Region X DCO/DCE, or designated alternate (normally DCO Region VIII), is DOD’s single point of contact at NIFC who plans, coordinates, and integrates DOD WFF operations. The DCO/DCE is DOD’s representative to the primary federal agency to provide subject matter expertise for all state and federal emergency responses. Requests for WFF originating at NIFC are coordinated, processed, and validated through the DCO.

10.6. Commander AFNORTH, as the USNORTHCOM designated theater JFACC minus JTF-AK JOA, provides theater support to CDRUSNORTHCOM and localized support to the Air Expeditionary Group Commander (AEG/CC) in conducting WFF operations. The JFACC will provide C2 of or exercise coordinating authority with the C-130 MAFFS aircraft, Title 10 helicopters (conducting water bucket operations), IAA assets, and be prepared to provide C2 for any additional Title 10 fixed wing and TACON over Title 10 rotary wing air expeditionary forces and will exercise coordinating authority with SAD/Title 32 forces through the air expeditionary force commander.

10.7. JTF-AK is a standing, activated, subordinate of USNORTHCOM. JTF-AK is responsible for planning and execution of civil support within the JTF-AK JOA. Commander 11 Air Force is the JFACC (JFACC-AK) in the JTF-AK JOA. When directed, JTF-AK provides support to NIFC/Alaska Interagency Coordination Center (AICC) during WFF missions in the JTF-AK JOA.

10.8. The Air Expeditionary Group (AEG) will stand up anytime NIFC submits an RFA for MAFFS, regardless of the number of aircraft requested. ACC will stand up the AEG-WFF under 1AETF (AFNORTH) and Air Mobility Command (AMC) will chop forces to the AEG. The JFACC will delegate TACON of the Title 10 aircraft and personnel to the AEG/CC. The AEG/CC has operational direction (OPDIR) with Title 32/5 C-130 aircraft, personnel, and equipment. The AEG/CC will be selected at the beginning of the fire season and will come from the rotational MAFFS lead wing for that year. The anticipated location of the AEG is at NIFC in Boise, ID.

#### 10.8. Funding.

10.8.1. The Economy Act provides the authority for DOD support to NIFC. DOD will be fully reimbursed for all support (to include pay and benefits) provided and supporting NIFC required certification and training.

10.8.2. DOD is required to provide a cost estimate to NIFC upon DOD approval of a NIFC RFA. Service/agency comptrollers responsible for billing NIFC shall cost their tasked units' requirements to support NIFC (including service/agency specific military and civilian pay and salary costs). Billing comptrollers shall forward the estimate to the NIFC financial manager, and request issuance of reimbursable orders or advance funds agreement (US Agriculture Department (AD) form 672) no later than three work days after their unit's deployment. Comptrollers shall provide a signed copy of all AD Forms 672 and amendments to USNORTHCOM/J83.

10.8.3. Billing comptrollers shall establish cost tracking mechanisms in their accounting systems aligned with each AD Form 672 for accurate and timely billing to NIFC. When additional funding is required to continue WFF operations, billing comptrollers shall notify NIFC financial manager of the estimated amount and the rationale for the increase.

10.8.4. Service/agency comptrollers responsible for billing NIFC shall use a Standard Form 1080 as the reimbursement invoice.

10.8.4.1. Invoicing for earned reimbursements (performance of work or services, payments to contractors, or delivery from inventory) shall begin within 60 calendar days after the month in which performance occurred.

10.8.4.2. Invoices shall correspond to costs incurred against each specific AD Form 672. Invoices shall identify DOD POC and the POC commercial phone number, as well as the fire incident name, the fire incident number, and the fire incident date from the AD Form 672. The invoice shall indicate whether it is a partial or final billing.

10.8.4.3. Supporting documentation for reimbursement shall include a copy of all requests for assistance. Backup documentation will identify the fire incident name, the fire incident number, the interagency number from the AD Form 672, and the costs incurred by each major item listed in the NIFC order.

10.8.4.4. Service/agency billing comptrollers shall submit SF 1080 invoices and backup documentation to: USDA Forest Service, financial manager, 3833 S. Development Ave., Boise, ID 83705. Acceptable methods of transmitting the SF 1080 and backup documentation to NIFC include printed copy via standard mail or overnight service, fax (208) 387-5398, or e-mail to: [bbilyeu@fs.fed.us](mailto:bbilyeu@fs.fed.us).

10.8.4.5. NIFC will provide an obligation number upon approving the SF 1080 billing package. Service/agency billing comptrollers shall cite the NIFC obligation number on the SF 1080 and submit it to the appropriate Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) paying station. Transfer of funds will be made directly to the military department or defense agency via intragovernmental paying and collecting (IPAC) system.

10.8.4.6. Service/agency billing comptrollers shall complete all reimbursement actions by mid Nov of calendar year or within 90 days of the end of the last activation of the season, whichever is later.

10.8.4.7. After submission of NIFC-approved invoices to DFAS, service/agency billing comptrollers shall send a copy of the final SF 1080 billing package to USNORTHCOM/J83. This documentation will be the basis of the consolidated close-out report to CJCS (JDOMS) to certify completion of invoice submission, report total DOD expenditures, and provide the status of reimbursement.

10.8.5. NIFC funding for MAFFS WFF operations is addressed in NIFC RFAs. Funding will be added to the standing fund site to cover WFF support operations.

## 10.9. Reporting.

10.9.1. DCO/JFACC/JFLCC/JTF CDR will submit a SITREP to CDRUSNORTHCOM by 0200Z daily with an as of time of 2400Z. Email reports to the NORAD-USNORTHCOM Command Center Aerospace Watch Officer at [nnc.cmdctracospace.omb@northcom.mil](mailto:nnc.cmdctracospace.omb@northcom.mil), DSN 692-1659, Comm (719) 554-1659.

10.9.2. Upon stand-up of C2 elements, contact N-NC/J1 for personnel reporting formats. JPERSTAT reports will be submitted NLT 1800Z daily to [nc.cog.j1.omb@northcom.smil.mil](mailto:nc.cog.j1.omb@northcom.smil.mil) or call the day beeper at (719) 921-5431 or night beeper at (719) 921-5432.

10.9.3. After Action Reports (AARs). USNORTHCOM components (DCO/JFACC/JFLCC/JTF CDR (when designated by CDRUSNORTHCOM)) shall submit AAR comments to USNORTHCOM J37 NLT 30 days after the end of the fire season (when DOD support is provided). Use item, discussion, and recommendation format for both sustain and improve comments.

#### 10.10. Public Affairs (PA).

10.10.1. USNORTHCOM supporting commands and service components will be prepared to (BPT) provide public affairs personnel to interface with fire information officers and provide timely, accurate information regarding the role of DOD in WFF. PA guidance is active when conducted in coordination with NIFC. Units identified to support WFF may actively engage the media to explain their role, however, any comments regarding a specific wildland fire will be referred to NIFC or the respective fire information office.

10.10.2. C-130 MAFFS units are highly encouraged to deploy with a public affairs officer (PAO) for the first 72 hours of any deployment in support of WFF. If a C-130 MAFFS unit repositions to a new operating location, the MAFFS commander is highly encouraged to recall his PAO for the 72 hours following the movement. Deployed PAOs will train a sufficient number of unit reps among the deployed personnel to handle routine media operations for deployment duration. To enhance unity of effort in releasing accurate information, all releases will be coordinated with NIFC or fire information office after review by the AEG/CC, if applicable.

10.10.3. WFF ground support units will BPT deploy with a public affairs detachment (PAD) or equal, as part of the Battalion headquarters support element, to interface with fire information officers and provide timely, accurate information regarding their support of WFF operations. Public Affairs operations will be conducted in coordination with NIFC or appropriate fire information officer following coordination with the DCO/DCE. The DCO maintains OPCON of the PAD. The PAD's activities are directed by the DCE PAO

10.10.4. Deploying PAOs will contact USNORTHCOM PA prior to deployment for additional PA guidance. Deployed PAOs will provide input to the DCE PA or AEG PA as appropriate for the daily PA SITREP. E-mail is the preferred method. The AEG PA and DCE PA will consolidate the input and submit an e-mail SITREP daily by 2100 (L) to USNORTHCOM at [nc.pa.omb@northcom.mil](mailto:nc.pa.omb@northcom.mil). SITREP should summarize PA activities over preceding 24 hours and forecast PA activities for the next day. USNORTHCOM PA can also be contacted at (719) 554-6889.

## **11. Summary**

11.1. NIFC has a solid process for WFF and is capable of adapting to the challenges of this year's fire season. USNORTHCOM will continue to monitor the WFF activities of NIFC and is prepared to respond upon request.