Strategic Plan for Implementing a Department of Defense Wildland Fire Policy

DoD Legacy Program

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# Strategic Plan for Implementing a Department of Defense Wildland Fire Policy

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Standard Form 298 (Rev. 8-98)  
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May 1995: The Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Environmental Security) directed the Marine Corps to chair a working group of representatives from each military service to draft a Defense Wildland Fire Policy.

ADUSD (ES) letter, dated 15 May 1995 states…

“The lack of a DoD-wide policy, especially the lack of training standards, places the Department at risk of not being able to respond effectively to wildland fires.”

Submitted to Mr. Gary D. Vest, the Principal Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Environmental Security

Fort Greely, Alaska
10 October 2000: Some Working Group recommendations were incorporated into revised Department of Defense Instruction DODI 6055.6.
E2.5.9. **Wildland Fire Preparation and Response.** Fire department and natural resources preparedness and response to wildland fires shall be in accordance with the [Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Program Review of 1995](#) and the [Interagency Fire Management Agreement](#) (reference (l)), except as covered under DoD Directive 3025.15 (reference (m)). The Department of Defense shall establish and maintain voting membership in the National Wildfire Coordinating Group to facilitate the development of policy, standards, and training with the Federal wildland agencies. The Department of Defense shall establish and maintain a fire protection specialist position at the National Interagency Fire Center to represent DoD wildland fire requirements, coordinate the use of military assets through the Director of Military Support, and manage the wildland fire qualification system for the Department of Defense.
What happened then?

NOBODY MOVED!
2003 DOD LEGACY PROJECT

TITLE: STRATEGIC PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTING DOD WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT POLICY

PURPOSE: Outline the specific actions required to implement the Wildland Fire Policy in DODI 6055.6 and the endorsed recommendations of the DoD Wildland Fire Policy Working Group Final Report.
PROBLEMS IMPLEMENTING DODI 6055.6

1. No Office of Primary Responsibility identified.

2. Responsibility crosses DoD functional stovepipes.
   - ODUSD (I&E) Environmental Readiness and Safety is responsible for fire and emergency services.
   - ODUSD (I&E) Conservation plans, programs, and responds to wildland fires on most installations.
   - ASD-HD, Assistant Secretary of Defense (Homeland Defense), new since 2003, now claims some jurisdictional authority.

3. DODI 6055.6 incorporates other federal policy by reference, but most don’t know what that means.
DOCTRINE 1: …preparedness and response to wildland fires shall be in accordance with the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Program Review of 1995.

Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana
DOCTRINE 1


A federal standard that guides the philosophy, direction, and implementation of wildland fire activities on federal lands. Endorsed by:

- U.S. Forest Service
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- National Park Service
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Bureau of Reclamation
DOCTRINE 1


- Federal lands with burnable vegetation must have a Wildland Fire Management Plan.
- Endorses the use of prescribed fire to protect, maintain, and enhance resources.
- Agencies will standardize training and certification requirements.
- Endorses interagency planning, preparedness, and prevention.
What Happened?

Department of Defense, DUSD (ES), Ms. Sherri Goodman signed the 2001 Review and Update of the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Program Review of 1995. However, no implementation instructions were issued.

Also adopted by:

- Department of Energy
- Department of Commerce
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- U.S. Geological Survey
- National Association of State Foresters
DOCTRINE 2:

...preparedness and response to wildland fires shall be in accordance with the Interagency Fire Management Agreement

Naval and Marine Corps Reserve Center California
DOCTRINE 2

DoD Signs Interagency Agreement for Fire Management

A Department level mutual assistance agreement for cooperation, support, and reimbursement signed by:

• U.S. Forest Service
• U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
• National Park Service
• Bureau of Land Management
• Bureau of Indian Affairs
• Bureau of Reclamation
What Happened?

- Department of Defense has not signed the Interagency Agreement for Fire Management.

Other Agencies prepare to confront a fire coming off of Dare County Bombing Range
What Happened?

- Confusion over a ‘competing agreement’ - Office of Assistant Secretary of Defense (Homeland Defense) is working a different agreement: 

  *Interagency Agreement for the Provision of Temporary Support During Wildland Fire Fighting Operations between the United States Department of Interior, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Defense* (in draft).

- Provides one-way support only – DoD to other agencies.

- Provides support only at ‘Planning Level 5’.

- States that all requests for DoD assistance must come to the Office of the Secretary of Defense (ASD-HD). Does allow exception for local mutual assistance agreements.
DOCTRINE 3: The Department of Defense shall establish and maintain voting membership in the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG).
DOCTRINE 3

DoD becomes a Voting Member of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG)

NWCG…
- Facilitates the development of policy, standards and training within the Federal wildland agencies and many others;
- Sets wildland fire fighter training, certification, and personal protective equipment standards;
- Staffs special working teams and advisory groups to address wildland fire issues of national significance.

Member agencies each provide a proportion of the NWCG operating budget.
What Happened?

- NWCG sent a letter, dated March 18, 2004, to Mr. Paul Dubois, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Installations and Environment), invited the Department of Defense to become a member of NWCG.

- Some installations use NWCG standards, but DoD does not yet recognize NWCG certification and training.

- DoD Fire Fighter Certification Program currently only recognizes National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) certification – not NWCG certification.

- Stalemate: Who pays for NWCG membership?
DOCTRINE 4: The Department of Defense shall establish and maintain a fire protection specialist position at the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC).
DOCTRINE 4

DoD staffs a fire protection specialist at NIFC.

NIFC…

- Is the ‘business office’ for interagency cooperation.
- Coordinates interagency dispatch for a seamless interagency response to wildfire, hurricane, flood, and tornado incidents across the nation;
- Maintains a nationwide wildfire equipment cache.

NIFC membership must be coordinated with the NIFC Governing Board and a potential financial obligation.
What Happened?

- A DoD office responsible for the position was not specifically identified – and no one has volunteered.
- No coordination with NIFC has occurred.
- Army’s Director of Military Support (DOMS) did cooperate with NIFC.
- New Joint Director of Military Support (JDOMS) reorganized under control of ASD-Homeland Defense.
Strategic Plan for Implementing DoD Wildland Fire Policy

Interagency assistance
Eglin AFB.
Current Delegations of Authority

- DUSD(I&E)
  - Oversees Fire and Emergency Services
  - OPR is ODUSD (ESOH)

- Air Force
  - Executive Agent for DoD Fire Fighter Certification Program

- Navy
  - Executive Agent for DoD National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS)

- Army
  - WAS Executive Agent for Military Support to Civilian Agencies
  - Joint Department Of Military Services (JDOMS) reorganized under ASD-HD, with NORTHCOM as OPR.

- Marine Corps
  - WAS Lead for temporary DoD Wildland Fire Policy Working Group
Revise DODI 6055.6 to...

Designate the Marine Corps as Executive Agent for execution of DoD wildland fire policy.

USMC will:

- Staff a Billet at the National Interagency Fire Center. DoD signs Interagency Agreement for Fire Mgmt.

- NIFC billet represents DoD on the National Wildfire Coordinating Group. DoD becomes a NWCG voting member.
STRATEGIC PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Supplement DODI 6055.6 with a Manual providing…

STAFFING AND POSITION DESCRIPTION GUIDANCE

- Position Descriptions will classify incumbent as either a ‘Primary’, ‘Secondary’, or ‘Collateral Duty’ Wildland Fire Fighter. (also ‘Voluntary’)

- Position Descriptions will establish minimum wildfire qualification levels in regards to certification and training.
Supplement DODI 6055.6 with a Manual providing…

TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION GUIDANCE

- The DoD Fire Fighter Certification Program will be used to track wildland firefighter certifications.

- DoD ‘red cards’ can be issued based upon the DoD FFCP database.
STRATEGIC PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION GUIDANCE

- DoD active duty and personnel in the GS-081 job series will meet the certification standards specified in...
  - NFPA 1051 – *Standard for Wildland Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications* and

- DoD personnel in the natural resources job series (GS-401 thru GS-499) may use the NWCG standards to attain the required NFPA certification.

The NWCG Wildland Fire Qualification Subsystem Guide (PMS 310-1/NFES 1414) will also be a DoD standard.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NFPA Job Level Title</th>
<th>NWCG Equivalent</th>
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| Wildland Fire Fighter I | Firefighter II | S-130 Fire Fighter Training  
S-190 Introduction to Fire Behavior  
I-100 Introduction to the Incident Command System |
| Wildland Fire Fighter II | Firefighter I | S-131 Advanced Fire Fighter Training  
S-133 Look Up, Look Down, Look Around  
S-201 Supervisory Concepts and Techniques  
S-211 Portable Pumps and Water Use  
S-212 Wildfire Power Saws  
S-216 Driving for the Fire Service |
| Wildland Fire Officer I | Single Resource Boss, or Incident Commander Type 4 | S-200 Initial Attack Incident Commander  
S-215 Fire Operations in the Urban Interface  
S-230 Crew Boss (Single Resource)  
S-234 Ignition Operations  
S-260 Fire Business Management Principles  
S-270 Basic Air Operations  
S-290 Intermediate Wildland Fire Behavior  
I-200 Basic Incident Command System  
ETC... |
TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION GUIDANCE

- The DoD Fire Fighter Certification Program will be used to track wildland firefighter certifications.
- DoD ‘red cards’ will be issued based upon the DoD FFCP database.
- DoD-specific certification categories will be identified. Examples:
  - Prescribed Fire Burn Boss Type 3 (RXB3), Low Complexity
  - Tractor/Plow Operator (TPOP)
Supplement DODI 6055.6 with a Manual providing:

**PHYSICAL FITNESS STANDARDS**

- Adopt objective Work Capacity Test (WCT) as a DoD standard.


- Define appropriate pre-employment and follow-up medical exam criteria.
STRATEGIC PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Certification and fitness requirements based on an evaluation of ‘complexity’ in the installation Wildland Fire Management Plan.

Fort Knox Kentucky
Avon Park Air Force Range, FL
STRATEGIC PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Supplement DODI 6055.6 with a Manual providing a Table of Authorization for Firefighter Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Installation Equipment.
OTHER STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENTS

➤ Requirement for an installation Wildland Fire Management Plan.

➤ Discusses options for Training:
  ➤ Specialized Training Curriculums
  ➤ NIFC Prescribed Fire Training Centers
  ➤ Modular training curriculums
  ➤ Cross-training opportunities at other DoD installations

➤ Recommends using the DoD National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS), wildland fire module, to report wildfires and prescribed burns.

➤ Discusses strategies for budgeting appropriated funds for wildland fire prevention & suppression.
Are we over-stating the risk?
Can we afford the ‘no action alternative’?