



POSITION STATEMENT

Wildland Fire

Submitted by the IAFC Wildland Fire Policy Committee

The International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) supports the vision statement from the United States National Wildland Fire Cohesive Strategy and adopts a vision for this century that serves the international community:

“To safely and effectively extinguish fire when needed; use fire where allowable; manage our natural resources; and as an international community, to live with wildland fire.”

The three goals of the IAFC are:

- (1) **Restore and Maintain Landscapes:** Landscapes across all jurisdictions are resilient to fire related disturbances in accordance with management objectives.
- (2) **Fire-adapted Communities:** Human populations and infrastructure can withstand a wildfire without loss of life and property.
- (3) **Wildfire Response:** All jurisdictions participate in reaching and implementing safe, effective, efficient risk-based wildfire management decisions.

The IAFC embraces the following guiding principles that are consistent with the vision statement and goals:

- Reducing risk to firefighters and the public is the first priority in every fire management activity.
- Sound risk management is the foundation for all management activities.
- Actively manage the land to make it more resilient to disturbance, in accordance with management objectives.
- Improve and sustain both community and individual responsibilities to prepare for, respond to and recover from wildfire through capacity-building activities.

- Rigorous wildfire prevention programs are supported across all jurisdictions.
- Wildland fire, as an essential ecological process and natural change agent, may be incorporated into the planning process and wildfire response.
- Fire management decisions are based on the best available science, knowledge, experience and risk assessment tools and processes, used to evaluate risk versus gain.
- Local, state, tribal and federal agencies support one another with wildfire response, including engagement in collaborative planning and the decision-making processes that take into account all lands and recognize the interdependence and statutory responsibilities among jurisdictions.
- Where land and resource management objectives differ, prudent and safe actions must be taken through collaborative fire planning and suppression response to keep unwanted wildfires from spreading to adjacent jurisdictions.
- Safe aggressive initial attack is often the best suppression strategy to keep unwanted wildfires small and costs down.
- Fire management programs and activities are economically viable and commensurate with values to be protected, land and resource management objectives, and social and environmental quality considerations.

The IAFC Commitment:

The IAFC is committed to promoting international efforts to reduce wildfire threats through aggressive prevention, public information and education, mitigation, preparedness and integrated wildland fire response efforts. Specifically, the IAFC will promote programs that improve firefighter and public safety, reduce community life-hazards and protect highly valued community assets. As the vast majority of IAFC members are representatives of local government, the IAFC is well positioned to address the local government perspective on these issues when dealing with officials at all levels of government.

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Approved by IAFC Board of Directors: 12 August 2013