

National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group

3833 South Development Avenue; Boise, ID 83705

NMAC Correspondence M2025-05

June 4, 2025

To: Geographic Area Coordinating Groups

From: National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group

Subject: 2025 Initial Attack Surge Capacity

As we approach the peak of the 2025 fire year, the National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC), in collaboration with national, state, and federal fire leaders, continues to monitor critical factors, including the fire environment, national resource availability, socio-political dynamics, and workforce adjustments. The complexity and scale of modern wildfires necessitate seamless collaboration among federal, state, Tribal, and local agencies, as well as community partners, to maximize resources, enhance effectiveness, and ensure a swift, coordinated response during the initial attack of wildland fires. To address these challenges, NMAC is introducing several innovative strategies to bolster initial attack surge capacity.

Modular Aerial Firefighting System (MAFFS) Initial Attack Aerial Quick Strike (AQS)

NMAC is in the discussion phase with the Department of Defense to enhance the use of the MAFFS platforms. If approved, the AQS capability is designed to provide rapid, short-term aerial support to bridge gaps in resource availability during critical fire situations. Key features include:

- **Deployment Duration:** Limited to 72 hours (excluding mobilization and demobilization days) to leverage existing readiness and minimize bureaucratic delays.
- **Purpose:** Bridges the gap until contract airtankers are available or a longer-duration Request for Assistance (RFA) for MAFFS in historic surge capacity is completed.
- **Key Elements:**
- AQS response approved by NMAC and mission-ready within 12 – 24 hours of request.
 - Logistics support for extended attack established post-initial operational period.
 - MAFFS maintenance contractors mobilized concurrently with AQS approval.

Helicopter Support for Airtanker Retardant Delivery on Initial Attack

To enhance initial attack capabilities, NMAC will trial the use of CH-47 helicopters for retardant or water delivery in support of Large Airtanker (LAT) and Very Large Airtanker (VLAT) initial attack retardant drops.

- **Trial Details**
 - Initial trial to be conducted at the Jefferson County Airtanker Base in Broomfield, Colorado.

National Surge Packages (NSP) for Initial Attack Support

As conditions increase the potential for initial attack activity and large fire growth, NMAC will assemble and deploy National Surge Packages (NSPs) to support initial attack operations.

NSP Overview:

- **Purpose**
 - Typically deployed at National Preparedness Level (PL) 5 for large fire support, NSPs may also be allocated at lower PLs to Geographic Areas (GAs) with heightened initial attack potential and conditions favorable to large fire growth.



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- **Composition**

- NSPs will include interagency resources from GAs in lower PLs and a lower risk of widespread significant fire potential.
- Resources may include federal, state, local, Tribal, or contracted assets.
- NSP's configuration may be prioritized over severity and prescribed fire assignments, therefore, available resources may be re-directed to an NSP.

- **Management**

- NMAC, through the National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC), will maintain oversight of NSPs.
- NSPs will be mobilized and supported using a national support code.
- As fire conditions evolve throughout the year, NMAC will notify the appropriate GAs responsible for assembling NSPs.
- Receiving GAs may deploy NSPs within their boundaries, prioritizing initial attack over large fire support.
- NMAC will coordinate with host GAs to reposition NSPs as conditions or priorities shift.

NSP Utilization Guidelines

- NMAC will determine the receiving GAs based on fire environment conditions.
- NMAC GA Liaison will communicate with host GA to determine desired NSP resource composition.
- NSPs are to include a qualified Taskforce Leader.
- NMAC may request GAs to recrew resources at assignment location.
- Receiving GAs prioritize NSP use for initial attack across all jurisdictional lands.
- NSP prioritization should focus on:
 - Probability of initial attack success.
 - Protection of values at risk.
 - Strategies to maintain reduced incident complexity.
- Large fire support is limited to critical scenarios where life and property are imminently threatened and only for short durations until relief resources arrive or conditions moderate.
- A designated NICC Coordinator will liaise with GAs to monitor NSP utilization and facilitate reassignment as directed by NMAC.

Please direct questions to your geographic area liaison.

/s/ Shane McDonald, Chair, NMAC

