



# WILDLAND STRIKE TEAMS & TASK FORCES

- 
- **WHAT IS A STRIKE TEAM OR TASK FORCE?**
  - **BENEFITS OF TF/ST**
  - **BUILDING A TASK FORCE**
  - **HOW DO WE USE THEM AT AN INCIDENT?**
  - **WHAT'S THE NEXT STEP???**

# STRIKE TEAMS AND TASK FORCES



Incident Command resources  
for wildfire response

## **TASK FORCE DEFINED**

Any combination of single resources assembled to accomplish a specific mission. Task Forces have a designated leader and operate under common communications.

## **STRIKE TEAM DEFINED**

A set number (usually 5) of resources of the same kind and type, with common communications and a leader.

May be pre-established and sent to an incident – or - formed at an incident

# BENEFITS:

---

- Organized Task Forces provide substantial firefighting forces without stripping all resources from sending jurisdictions.
  - One dispatch brings multiple resources and response capability
  - Self-contained, self-supporting unit
  - Task Force members have worked together extensively on local mutual aid responses
    - know each other's strengths and weaknesses
    - Familiar with member department's tactics

# BENEFITS:

---

- Task Forces help address “span of control” management issues.
  - Management of resources on recent large fires in Oklahoma has been identified as a critical issue
  - IC/OSC/DIVS only has to communicate with TFLD
  - TF resources positively know their supervisor
  - Margin of safety increased – TFLD instinctively knows who the resources are within the TF

# BENEFITS:

---

- Communication problems reduced.
  - # of personnel using primary frequencies is reduced.
    - TFLD can communicate directly with assigned resources on their freqs
  - # of resources that the IC/OSC/DIVS must communicate with is reduced

# CUSTER COUNTY WILDLAND TASK FORCE

## *PURPOSE:*

*To provide a formidable contingent of manpower and equipment that, when called upon, will deploy to safely combat and extinguish wildland fires or other emergencies.*

# Custer County Wildland Task Force

---

## Member Departments

- × Arapaho
- × Butler
- × Clinton
- × Custer City
- × Thomas
- × Weatherford
- × Out of County Departments
- × Bessie
- × Eakly
- × Hydro

# CUSTER COUNTY WILDLAND TASK FORCE

Typical response:

- ✦ Task Force Leader
- ✦ Safety/Staging Officer
- ✦ 5 Brush Pumpers
- ✦ 1 Tender
- ✦ 1 Support Unit (Fuel, Tools, Filters, etc...)



# WILDLAND TASK FORCE

---

## PROCEDURES USED

- ✘ When requesting the task force, the following information will be needed:
  - + Who is requesting and location of the fire.
  - + Incident Commander's/designee info
  - + Contact numbers for command post.
  - + The location of the command post and/or staging area.
  - + Communications Plan/Radio Frequencies
  - + Maps of the area

# WILDLAND TASK FORCE

---

## PROCEDURES USED cont'd:

- ✘ The Task Force Leader (TFLD) will report to and receive assignments from the IC/OSC/DIVS
- ✘ Task Force units report directly to the TFLD
- ✘ The Task Force remains together and IS NOT SPLIT for separate assignments

# WILDLAND TASK FORCE

---

## PROCEDURES USED cont'd

- ✘ The TFLD will obtain the assignment for the task force from the IC. If an assignment is identified early, the task force can begin their task upon arrival at the incident.
- ✘ The TFLD WILL NOT assume command of an incident.

# WILDLAND TASK FORCE

## PROCEDURES USED cont'd

- ✘ Accountability is strictly enforced by the TFLD
- ✘ Task Force members follow the Incident Command System.
- ✘ Rotation of equipment/members is determined by the TFLD, but shall not exceed 24 hours.
- ✘ Release of the Task Force shall be as a “TASK FORCE”, not individual resources.

# Wildland Task Forces

---

## ✘ Communications

- + Common comms between TF/ST need to be frequencies other than OKFIRE1 and V-Tac's
  - ✘ These are commonly used as command channels
  - ✘ If multiple teams are using them it can cause confusion

# WILDLAND TASK FORCE/STRIKE TEAMS

## WHAT'S THE NEXT STEP?

### ✘ Engine Strike Teams

- + Assist in structure protection on wildfires
- + Assist smaller communities on large structure fires
- + Other deployments as needed

### ✘ Tender Strike Teams

- + Assist in areas with limited water supply
- + Sometimes we don't need brush units but we need water

# WILDLAND TASK FORCE/STRIKE TEAMS

## ✘ In summary

- + Great asset when you need it
- + Makes it easier to manage your incident
- + Easy to request
- + Operate within the NIMS/ICS system
- + **DO NOT SELF DEPLOY..... Did I mention DON'T SELF DEPLOY**
- + Do not use OKFIRE 1 for TF/ST communications
- + Engine/ tender strike teams

# QUESTIONS?

Mike Karlin, Asst. Chief  
Weatherford Fire Department  
580-772-5345 – Office  
580-774-8082 – Mobile  
[Mike.karlin@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Mike.karlin@sbcglobal.net)

