



## Guidelines for Managing Private Resources on Wildland Fire Incidents

On Tuesday, August 12, 2008, the IAFC board of directors approved the position statement and private resource guidelines proposed by the Wildland Fire Policy Committee. Here is the approved position statement:

The IAFC encourages property owners to protect their homes before they are threatened by wildfires and recommends that property owners follow FIREWISE and Fire Safe Program provisions (defensible space), retrofit their homes to modern wildland building standards and install fixed fire-protection systems (internal and external). These proactive measures have proven themselves highly effective in protecting homes in the wildland urban interface areas. Private fire-protection resources engaged to prepare homes threatened by wildland fires must adhere to evacuation orders if and when issued.

Many homes are destroyed during the early stages of a wildfire when fire resources, including public and private, are limited. Homes and communities located in the wildland urban interface zones should be designed to withstand fire without any fire resources assigned to them.

### Guidelines for Managing Private Resources on Wildland Fire Incidents

The following approved guidelines serve as a tool for the authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) or incident commander (IC) in managing private resources on incidents. It is important to note these are only guidelines and it remains the individual decision of the AHJ or IC to determine implementation levels:

1. All private resources must respect the decision of the AHJ/IC as they're the final decision makers in the command, control, liability and safety of the incident.
2. The AHJ/IC and law enforcement has complete authority and legal right to control an emergency incident. Private resources are *not* first responders and are completely subject to the directions and limits set forth by public-safety agency personnel. The private resource has no claim or stake in unified command and will not have any role in incident command.
3. Private resource vendors shall provide a representative that reports to the incident commander or the liaison officer and can communicate with their resources.
  - a. This representative shall attend all planning and operational briefings and should be available to represent said entity in regards to qualifications and specific interests to be involved, etc.
  - b. Private resources are responsible to communicate their location and movements through the private resource representative to the incident commander/liaison officer.
  - c. Failure to notify the incident commander/liaison officer of the location or movement of private resources could subject them to removal from the incident.
4. Private resources shall check in with the incident commander prior to deployment within an emergency area. ICs need to maintain situational awareness regarding private resources and their compliance with evacuation orders.

5. A message should be included in the incident action plan and briefed at operational briefings regarding known private resources activity on or near the incident.
6. Private resources must be able to monitor incident radio traffic so they maintain situational awareness and know when an area is being evacuated/ restricted. They shall refrain from using incident radio frequencies.
7. Private resources should focus their activities on prefire activities and pretreatment of values-at-risk prior to a road closure order.
  - a. Once a road closure is ordered, they must evacuate the area so safety is not compromised, and they cannot return until the area is reopened or until they have received IC authorization to reenter.
  - b. If the private resource does not evacuate the area, the private resource assumes full responsibility for the safety of the resource, personnel and equipment.
  - c. The AHJ/IC should not be held liable for any loss, injury or death.
8. The IC or local law enforcement officials having jurisdiction must authorize access to any community under evacuation/restriction.
9. Private fire protection resource contractors who are employed on an incident (as a local, state or federal resource) are not allowed to subcontract with the insurance industry or freelance to local homeowners while mobilized on the incident.
10. Private resources not under contract to a public fire agency shall adhere to all local business license provisions.
11. All private fire protection resources should be identified (non-emergency) on the outside of the vehicle, to ensure they do *not* appear to be a public fire resource. This includes no red lights, sirens or facsimile fire agency decal.
12. During fires where a community meeting is hosted by the AHJ/IC, a clear understanding must be created with the general public as to the role of government in incident command and private resources.