



State of Wyoming Military Department Office of the Adjutant General

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For immediate release

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Wyo. Air Guard answers the Texas wildfire call

CHEYENNE—The Wyoming Air National Guard will send 13 personnel and one aircraft to Texas in support of the Texas wildfires, on April 18. The Wyoming Air Guard is one of four military units nationwide equipped with the second generation of the U.S. Forest Service's Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System or MAFFS 2, capable of dispersing 3,000 gallons of fire retardant per load.

According to Col. Steve Rader, vice commander for the 153rd Airlift Wing, this will be the first time Wyoming has used the new MAFFS 2. "It is a different delivery system. Instead of five separate tanks, it's got one large tank. And instead of two tubes coming out the back of the airplane, we've got one tube that comes out the paratroop door on the rear side, but it's got the same amount of retardant," Rader said. "We had two crews trained a couple of weeks ago in Colorado Springs, and they are ready for the mission."

Rader said that the aircraft and 13 member crew and maintenance personnel are scheduled to depart Cheyenne at 7 a.m., Monday, and will land at Dyess Air Force Base, near Abilene, Texas, where they will fall under the command and control of the 302nd Air Expeditionary Group from Boise, Idaho.

As of April 15, a total of 722,891 acres and 151 homes and structures have burned in Texas fires. There are approximately 1,250 firefighting personnel being managed by the Texas Forest Service from 34 states assigned to the Texas fires.

The last time the Wyoming Air National Guard was called to fight fires was in 2008, for fires in California.

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Media planning to view the departure at the Air National Guard should call (307) 275-6414, or email ngwy.pao@ng.army.mil by 5:00 p.m. today, April 17, 2011. Media must be at the Air National Guard by 5:30 a.m. Monday, April 18.

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