



**Cal OES**  
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE  
OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Cal OES Tasks California National Guard to Activate Air**

**SACRAMENTO** – Following a request for support from the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) and CAL FIRE, Gov. Edmund G. Brown Jr. directed the Adjutant General of the California National Guard, Maj. Gen. David S. Baldwin, to order two specialized firefighting C-130J aircraft and crews from the California Air National Guard's 146th Airlift Wing to state active-duty status to assist with wildfires raging across Northern California.

California's wildlands are already tinder-dry due to extreme drought conditions and these assets are in addition to the 18 helicopters activated earlier in the week.

"It's critical we address these wildfires quickly and the California National Guard's MAFFS aircraft are a unique asset to our firefighting efforts," said Mark Ghilarducci, Director of Cal OES, which is responsible for overall coordination of the state's response to major emergencies. "Combined with the engines and other resources already positioned by Cal OES, CAL FIRE and other state and local partners, incident managers will have additional flexibility to contain and control wildfires."

The air tankers will relocate from their home station at Channel Islands Air National Guard Station in Port Hueneme to McClellan Airfield, near Sacramento, where the aircraft will land and reload with fire retardant, allowing shorter response times for all civilian and military aircraft working the fires in that region.

"These aircraft and crew bring a tremendous capability and level of experience to the fight at a critical time," Baldwin said. "We're leveraging our community based force and interagency partnerships to cut across military, state and regional levels to funnel resources where they're needed most."

The California Air National Guard's C-130J aircraft are equipped with the US Forest Service's Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System II (MAFFS), which is capable of dropping up to 3,000 gallons of water or fire retardant. The system slides into the back of an aircraft, and water or retardant is released through a nozzle located on the rear left side of the plane. MAFFSs equipment and aircraft are activated to supplement U.S. Forest Service, CAL FIRE, and civilian air tankers during periods of high wildfire activity throughout the nation.

"The recent lightning activity in Northern California has sparked over a dozen fires, said Chief Ken Pimlott, director of CAL FIRE. Our well-exercised and long-standing relationship with the California National Guard allows for rapid, effective deployment of these additional resources during times of elevated fire activity."

The 146th Airlift Wing rapidly responds to numerous state and federal firefighting missions every year. They are one of four MAFFS capable units in the entire country; together with their Air National Guard and Air Reserve counterparts, last year they flew a combined total of 576 sorties dropping nearly 14 million pounds of retardant on wildfires across the California and five other western states.

Please contact Brad Alexander, Chief of Media Relations and Public Information for Cal OES at (916) 502-5717 for further information.