United States Fire Administration

A Prepared and Resilient Fire and Emergency Medical Service
U.S. Fire Administration Brief

• USFA Role in Emergency Response Function #4

• Replacement of National Fire Incident Reporting System
Important Distinction...
What is Burning?

Wildland = Location
Interface Communities = Location
Intermix Communities = Location
Suburban Communities = Location

**WILDFIRE** is our concern!

Wildfire and the wildland urban interface (WUI) (fema.gov)
National Fire Academy: Preparedness

• The purpose of the National Fire Academy is to promote the professional development of the fire and emergency response community and allied professionals.

• Supplement and support State and local fire service training and educational programs and reaches over 90,000 students annually

  - NEW: Responding to the Interface (*Community Conflagrations)
  - Wildland Firefighter GAP (NWCG/NFPA)
  - Wildland Firefighter (NWCG Hybrid/On-line)
  - Introduction to Wildland Urban Interface Evacuation Planning and Procedures
  - Wildland Urban Interface: Fire-Adapted Communities
  - Developing a **Community Wildfire Protection Plan**
  - WUI: Strategies for Developing a Fire-Adapted Community
  - WUI: Fire-Adapted Communities — Introduction and Leadership
  - All WUI Training resources at [https://www.usfa.fema.gov/wui/training/](https://www.usfa.fema.gov/wui/training/)
Wildland Fire Mitigation Commission

- Established by Biden Infrastructure Bill, will operate for 1 year.

- Tasked to Deliver a series of Recommendations to Congress for wildfire prevention, mitigation, suppression, and management.

- Focus on public policy, including statutory change and appropriations.

- 148 Recommendations – Report to Congress Sept 21
ESF #4 Firefighting Purpose and Scope

- Provides Federal support of the detection and suppression of wildland, rural, and urban fires resulting from, or occurring coincidentally with, an all-hazard incident requiring a coordinated national response for assistance.
- Coordinates firefighting “activities” and provides personnel, equipment, and supplies in support of local, state, tribal, territorial, and insular area agencies involved in wildland, rural, and urban firefighting operations.
- Firefighting is inherently a LOCAL responsibility.
ESF #4 Firefighting Roles

• U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) are co-coordinators of ESF #4 with specific responsibilities:

• **USFS coordinates** at the national and regional levels with FEMA, appropriate state, territorial, tribal, and insular area agencies, and cooperating agencies [including EMAC] on all issues related to **response activities**.

• **USFA coordinates** with appropriate state, territorial, tribal and insular agencies and **local** fire departments **to expand structural firefighting resource capacity** in the existing **national firefighting mobilization system** and provides information on protection of emergency services sector critical infrastructure.
### USDA/Forest Service

- **Coordinates Federal firefighting activities.** This function is accomplished by mobilizing firefighting resources in support of local, state, tribal, territorial, and insular area wildland, rural, and urban firefighting agencies nationwide.

- **Provides qualified ESF #4 personnel** to serve at the national and regional area levels during Stafford Act incidents.

- Provides support personnel at the national, regional, and incident levels.

- Requests assistance from supporting agencies as necessary to accomplish ESF #4 responsibilities.

- Provides logistics support through the appropriate Geographic Area Coordination Center and/or National Interagency Coordination Center for mobilizing resources for firefighting.

- Assumes full responsibility for suppression of wildfires burning on National Forest System lands and joins in a unified command with the local jurisdiction on incidents threatening National Forest System lands.

- Provides and coordinates firefighting assistance to other Federal land management; state forestry; and local, tribal, territorial, and insular area fire organizations as requested under the terms of existing agreements and the National Response Framework (NRF).

- Arranges for and provides direct liaison with local, state, tribal, territorial, and insular area EOCs and fire chiefs in the designated area, as appropriate, to coordinate requests for firefighting assistance in structural or industrial fire detection, protection, and suppression operations.

### US Fire Administration

- **Provides qualified ESF #4 personnel** to serve at the national and regional area levels during Stafford Act incidents.

- **Establishes liaison with EMAC** personnel on governor-to-governor requests for firefighting resources to ensure the ESF#4 primary agency and appropriate support agencies are aware of any firefighting resources provided through EMAC.

- Assists with identification of local structure fire resources not currently available through the existing national firefighting mobilization system, and assists with incorporating these resources into the system.

- Provides contact with appropriate fire service organizations/associations at the national level to ensure any actions by these organizations relative to disaster planning, preparedness, or response are coordinated with the ESF #4 primary agency and other appropriate support agencies.

- In conjunction with the ESF #4 primary agency and other appropriate support agencies, provides direct liaison with local, state, tribal, territorial, and insular area EOCs and fire chiefs in the designated area, as appropriate.

- Disseminates information and provides subject matter experts to improve infrastructure protection efforts within the emergency services sector.

- Provides assistance with assessment of impacted emergency services sector critical infrastructure.
ESF #4 Firefighting Purpose and Scope

• In a Presidentially declared emergency or major disaster under the Stafford Act, firefighting resources from... “across the country, as well as from several foreign countries, through the national firefighting mobilization system to incidents anywhere in the U.S.”

• The national firefighting mobilization system is used by the Federal, State, and participating local fire agencies for mobilizing resources primarily for wildland fires and some all hazard incidents. It includes IQS/IQCS, Home | IQCS (nwcg.gov) IROC IROC | Wildland Fire Application Information Portal (wildfire.gov), and participating local dispatch systems. Procedures are in the National Interagency Mobilization Guide 2023 National Interagency Mobilization Guide (nifc.gov).

• The national firefighting mobilization system in reality is a list of wildland fire resources with extremely limited structural firefighting resource capacity.
Leverage Data Platform Update to Enhance ESF#4 Capability

Goal of NERIS is to empower the local fire and emergency services community by equipping them with near real-time information and analytic tools that support data informed decision-making for enhanced preparedness and response to incidents involving all hazards.

USFA will use the NERIS Platform to Expand the Number of Fire Departments available for the national firefighting mobilization system.
- Primary source of state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) fire department resources throughout the nation.

- **NERIS onboarding** of SLTT fire departments across the nation will begin in **early 2024** with full transition to NERIS as the national fire and all hazards data platform through Q1 2025 and beyond.

- As SLTT fire departments onboard the NERIS platform, **USFA will build a national database of response resources that ...**

  Will be leveraged as the **national firefighting mobilization system for firefighting activities and all hazards.**
Fire Departments on NERIS platform will by default be accessible resources for mobilization under ESF #4. 

Mobilization requests can then be considered by the fire department based on their local needs and capabilities and accept or reject the assignment. 

Fire departments will also be able to wholly opt out of ESF #4 assignment by selecting the option in the NERIS platform. 

Reimbursement to fire departments that accept an ESF #4 assignment will be handled according to current practices.
The goal of NERIS is to empower the local fire and emergency services community by equipping them with near real-time information and analytic tools that support data informed decision-making for enhanced preparedness and response to incidents involving all hazards.
Guiding Objectives

- **Replace the 20+ year legacy National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS), thereby eliminating data quality issues and security vulnerabilities**
- **NERIS to be the premier source of all-hazards incident information and innovative analytics**
- Provide **near real-time information** on the overall scope of fire and emergency incidents across the U.S.
- Provide **capabilities for documenting and introducing community risk reduction** efforts
- Provide **greater insights into vulnerability gaps** where resources can be used to harden communities, mitigate risks, and reduce the severity of impact in future emergency and disaster events.
Interagency agreement established between USFA and DHS S&T. Research and development contract awarded through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Science and Technology Directorate (DHS S&T) to the Fire Safety Research Institute (FSRI).

FSRI is a part of UL Research Institutes, the nonprofit safety science organization within the UL enterprise.

In collaboration with USFA, DHS S&T and the American fire service, FSRI will develop and provide the new NERIS platform for use by fire and emergency services departments nationwide.
# Development Timeline and Milestones

**CY 2023**
- USFA and DHS S&T establish partnership for the core data standard and NERIS development with the Fire Safety Research Institute (FSRI).
- Complete development of the NERIS data framework and standards.
- Complete R&D on the open solutions architecture and NERIS initial operating capability.

**Status**
- 75%
- Complete

**CY 2024**
- Complete development and release of a full NERIS v1.0.
- Develop and implement nationwide launch campaign on NERIS and support transitioning local fire departments.
- Complete migration of historical NFIRS data into a cloud-based library archive tool.

**Status**
- On Schedule

**CY 2025**
- Complete NERIS development iterations to include integration with priority sensors, data and systems, and analytics for fire and emergency service leaders.
- Provide technical assistance, user support, and education to facilitate onboarding fire and emergency service agencies.
- Fully transition all users onto NERIS, and decommission NFIRS.

**Status**
- On Schedule
MOSS 2025 Project

FY 2025 Budget request provides the following:

- **Essential upgrade** to NETC Campus Information Technology Infrastructure ($7M)

- First efforts of this project requires removal of all CAT5 & CAT6 cabling throughout all facilities with IT components and follow-on installation of *fiber optic cabling across the 107-acre campus.*
NFA Projects - 2025

Expansion of the Executive Fire Officer (EFO) and Managing Officer (MO) Programs – Saving Firefighter and Community Lives and Meeting State and Local Demands

The FY 2025 Budget includes an increase of 4 positions, 2 FTE, and $374k in program funding and $271k (pay) for updates to the Executive Fire Officer and Managing Officer Programs.

Supports the leveraging of staff expertise, developing tracking and data collection systems, stakeholder involvement, and increasing evidence-based decision making for both programs. It will also fund the research and publication requirements needed for EFO students.

SLTT interest results in 450 applicants for 150 available seats
National Fire and EMS Programs

- **Educate the public** on fire prevention and community risk reduction
  - Home Fire Fatality Tracking

- **Special Operations**
  - Integrated Response with LEOs

- **EMS**
  - Stakeholder engagement
    - COVID
    - Active Shooter
  - Curriculum consultation
  - Research consultation
HR 7077 – 117th Congress
(Pending Rulemaking)

• Authorizes the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) to conduct on-site fire safety investigations of major fires and other fires under other specified circumstances.

• In the case of a major fire, the USFA may send incident investigators to the site.
  • safety specialists,
  • fire protection engineers,
  • codes and standards experts,
  • researchers, and
  • fire training specialists)

• USFA may send fire investigators to conduct fire safety investigations at the site of any fire with unusual or remarkable context that results in losses less severe than those occurring as a result of a major fire,
  • Issue a public report to federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial authorities on the findings of such investigation,