



# Modular Airborne Firefighting System

## Highlights

- Eight MAFFS in three Air National Guard units and one Air Reserve unit
- Air National Guard Units:
  - 145th Airlift Wing  
Charlotte, N.C.
  - 146th Airlift Wing  
Channel Islands, Calif
  - 153rd Airlift Wing  
Cheyenne, Wyo
- Aircraft can be rapidly refilled with retardant or water, allowing operators to spend more time fighting fires in the air
- Each dispersal unit is a self-contained unit that discharges out the rear of the aircraft
- Self-pressurizing system that provides greater flexibility for the Forest Service to respond in amore effective and efficient way to the nation's wildland firefighting needs
- Carrying capacity of 3,200 gallons of retardant or water
- Ability to respond within 48 hours
- MAFFS aircrew receive specialized certification by the U.S. Forest Service and annual refresher certification



**Air Guard crews flying C-130s equipped with Modular Airborne Firefighting Systems (MAFFS) flew 367 sorties and dropped more than 880,000 gallons of fire retardant on wildfires in the western U.S. in FY13, lessening the risk to firefighters and civilians while protecting critical infrastructure and personal property.**

**Mission:** Provides the U.S. Forest Service with additional aerial fire-fighting assets to assist after the capabilities of commercial and contract air tankers have been exhausted.

**Overview:** In the 1970s Congress established the Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System (MAFFS) to assist in the wildfire suppression program.

MAFFS use Air National Guard aircraft and crews to release retardant or water from special tanks in less than five seconds through two tubes at the rear of the plane. Today a total of eight MAFFS units are operated by the Air National Guard and the Air Force Reserve.

MAFFS aircraft loaded with retardants are guided to fire-ravaged areas by U.S. Forestry Service piloted aircraft. MAFFS units do not require any aircraft modifications and can be loaded or unloaded using specially designed trailers located at each MAFFS operational unit.

**MAFFS II:** A new system implemented in 2011, MAFFS II has several improvements, including less reliance on ground equipment and personnel. Now a self-contained system, its onboard compressor decreases ground time and allows for multiple drops on each mission. MAFFS II provides better coverage and is cleaner and more environmentally-friendly.

The legacy MAFFS will be kept by the U.S. Forest Service as spares until their service life has expired.

Air National Guard MAFFS crews have fought wildfires in the United States, Europe, Africa and Indonesia.