



**CANADA REPORT**  
**2002**

by  
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The 2002 fire season in Canada will reflect a near average fire year for both total fire numbers and hectares consumed compared against the ten year average. As of December 31<sup>st</sup> Canada, recorded 7,824 fires for 2,757,174.91 hectares.

The Canadian winter was relatively mild, with low snow levels in almost all regions until March, when winter arrived for many areas. This along with a cool spring delayed the fire season by up to two weeks in areas from Ontario (ON) west, but did little to relieve the continuing drought conditions in many areas. The persistent drought conditions of Saskatchewan (SK) fringe and northern areas and the north central areas of Alberta (AB) was added to by these low snow levels. The dry condition had western wildfire managers anticipating another active fire season. Little to no spring rains in the west further increased the fire occurrence and severity potential throughout April.

The hazard continued to build in the west through May. Continuing drought conditions and late green-up continued to escalate the hazard in AB and SK. Increase in human caused fires in the SK fringe areas and north central AB had those western provinces bringing on additional resources. CL 215's air tankers from the Northwest Territories (NT) and land based airtankers from British Columbia were mobilized to AB and SK in anticipation of increased fire load.

AB, SK and Manitoba (MB) all experienced increased fire activity with AB picking up the bulk of the activity. Extreme fire behaviour in AB and SK resulted in some wildfires escaping initial attack and growing to project size. National mobilization of resources was initiated and resources moved into AB and SK. CIFFC moved to a National Preparedness Level II before the end of May. A call went out to National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) in Boise Idaho for firefighting crews but their situation was such that they could not assist. By June 1<sup>st</sup> the situation was intensifying, both fire crews and incident management teams had been mobilized and committed, equipment had begun to move and air tankers were becoming scarce.

Early June saw a continuation on the drought through central AB and extending into SK. Continued escalation of large fire activity required CIFFC to move to a level III preparedness nationally. Resources continued to move into AB and SK drawing down the national reserves. Only short lived reprieves punctuated the steady move of resources to the drought stricken areas of AB and SK through-out June. The United States (US) also was experiencing a growing and expanding wildfire

problem, forcing them to reach Preparedness Level IV by the second week of June and Level V on June 21<sup>st</sup>. At Level V the US protocol indicates that a CIFFC representative sit in the NICC and advise their national multi-agency coordinating group (MAC) on how Canadian resources can best assist. With the conditions in Canada improving and the possibility of crews being available for out of country assignments a CIFFC representative went to NICC on June 22<sup>nd</sup> to coordinate the potential arrival of Canadian resources. Within 24 hours of the Canadian representative's arrival at NICC, the Canadian situation again took a turn for the worse and the possibility of available resources for the US quickly evaporated with large mobilizations of personnel again to Canada's western regions. With no resources available for export to the US the Canadian representative returned home and daily contact was kept up with the US by phone. By the end of June 1,371 professional fire management personnel, 57 air tankers and assorted fire fighting equipment had been mobilized in support of the western wildfire activity.

July brought little relief. Wildfire fire action continued, seemingly without let-up. As resources were released, or, made available, they were quickly redeployed. Nationally resources were at a premium. The US could not offer us support nor could we offer support to them. North America was burning. The fire hazard and activity began to spread east. During the first week of July Quebec (QC) got hit with storms that gave way to 170 new fires starts many of which went quickly to project size. This prompted the recall of some of their resources recently deployed. Before the end of the second week of July both Manitoba (MB) and Ontario (ON) had joined the fray with dry lightning storms causing multiple starts and escapes, generating more large fires. There were now numerous campaign fires burning in AB, SK, MB, ON and QC, British Columbia (BC) was also heating up in the southern interior with one escaped fire in the Lilloit region. Resource Orders for crews, specialized air tankers and overhead personnel could not be filled through CIFFC. Medium helicopters were in high demand. This prompted CIFFC to move to Level IV. The US still at level V could offer no assistance. Precipitation at the end of the third week in July offer some relief to the west but orders still remained open in ON and could not be filled. Cooler temperatures and some moisture over the last week off July quickly turned the tables on the Canadian fire situation. During the third and fourth week of July, CIFFC moved from a level IV to level II and resources were becoming available. The Canadian requirements were rapidly decreasing.

The fire season in Canada continued the slow down that began in late July. The situation in the US remained critical at level V, with the competition for resources remaining high. With the increase in resource availability in Canada CIFFC began to look a ways to support to the US without leaving ourselves short in the event of a return to national fire activity. With the US at planning level V their protocol dictates that they call in their co-operators to assist in their planning and potential allocation of external resources. On August 1st CIFFC again mobilized and activated the Canadian Interagency Resource Representative (IARR) to sit in on the US national MAC Group, part of the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) in Boise ID. Through discussions between the Canadian Liaison and the MAC, it was decided that Oregon would be the best place to concentrate the Canadian support. A Canadian Regional IARR along with Clerical support and Media relations individuals was established in

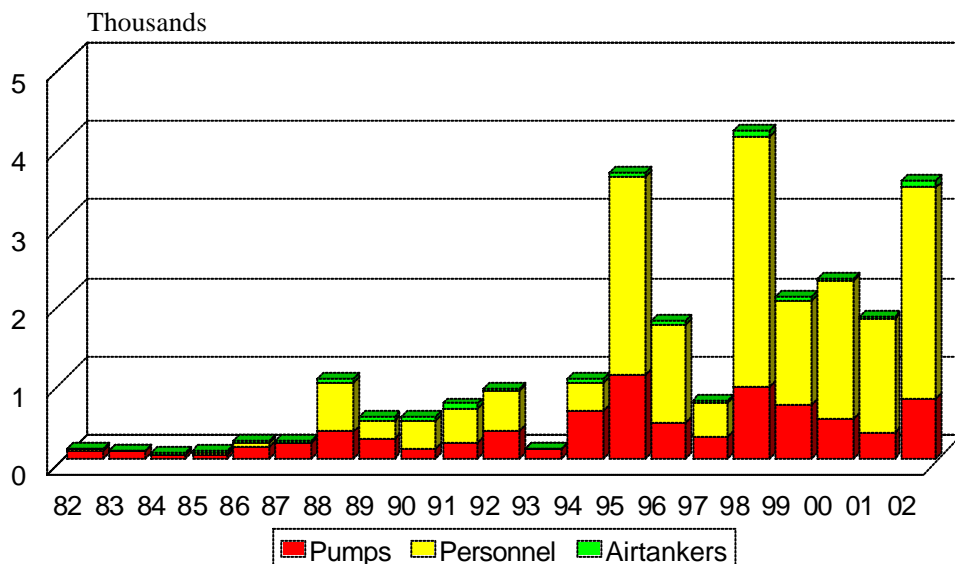
Medford Oregon, within the US North West Geographic Region. By August 3<sup>rd</sup> 5/20p crews, 22 overhead and 5 field IARR's arrived in Boise for their orientation and then on the Oregon the following day for assignment. As the situation in Canada continued the downward spiral, mobilization to the US increased until August 23 went the last contingent of Canadian wildfire professionals arrived in Boise ID. By September 8, 2002 the last of the Canadians had completed their assignment in the US and were headed home. When the final tally was taken, 917 Canadian wildfire personnel from BC, YT, AB, NT, SK, MB, and ON along with 300 fire pumps and 2,000 lengths of fire hose was mobilized in support of the US 2002 wildfire activity.

CIFFC responded to 176 resource requests which resulted in approximately 2,676 personnel including 917 mobilized into the United States, 31 airtankers groups for a total 77 airtankers, 763 fire pump kits including 300 to the US, 12,100 lengths of hose, and other associated fire management equipment. CIFFC was able to call upon the Canadian wildfire management personnel in support of the escalating late August fire activity in Oregon.

As shown in the following graph (Resource Units) agency dependence on outside resources continues to grow. This year once again tested the National and International operational procedures, agreements, arrangements and exchange standards that have been developed and are in place for many of the agencies including CIFFC. The continued development and acceptance of national and international standards for all resources and operational procedures will continue to raise the level of wildfire management in Canada.

## **Resource Units**

1982 - 2002



Canada as a whole experienced a near average fire year for fire number and hectares burnt. As of December 31<sup>st</sup>, 7,824 fires for 2,757,174.91 ha. were recorded compared to the ten year average of 7,755 fires and 2,664,136 ha respectively. There were 27 prescribed fires reported for a total of 3,590.68 hectares.

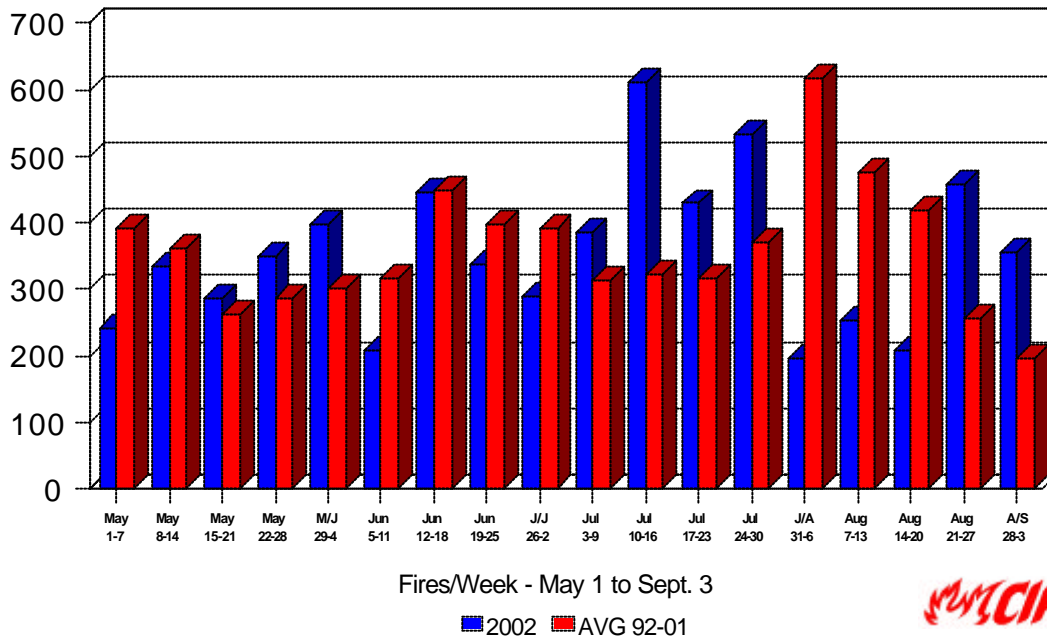
The following statistics show that out of a total of 7,824 fires burning 2,757,174.91 ha., 676 were actioned under a Modified Response, consuming 1,200,409.33 ha. The fires that received a Modified Response account for only 8.7 % of the total fires, but 43.5 % of the total area consumed.

WILDFIRE							Prescribed Fire	
FIRES				HECTARES			Fires	Ha
	Full	Modified	Total		Full	Modified	Total	
BC	1537	221	1758		5,452	3,152	8,604.00	
YT	58	11	69		8,132.00	27,568.00	35,700.00	
AB	1430		1430		496,566.69		496,566.69	5
NT	52	33	85		6,325.54	20,763.63	27,089.17	
SK	753	125	878		698,474.1	181,108.5	879,582.60	2
MB	662	92	754		15,428	65,746	81,174.00	
ON	1030	84	1114		81701.0	90811.0	172,512.00	3
QC	803	92	895		232,040	780,745.60	1,012,785.60	1
NF	130	13	143		4,985	30,499	35,484.00	
NB	317		317		246.40		246.40	
NS	267		267		211.25		211.25	
PE	29		29		132.3		132.30	
PC	80	5	85		7,071.3	15.6	7,086.90	16
TOT	7,148	676	7,824		1,556,765.	1,200,409.3	2,757,174.91	27

The following graph shows the number of fire starts by week for 2002 as compared to the 10 year average. The anomalies in fire occurrence during the 2002 season can be seen.

## WEEKLY FIRE STARTS

2002



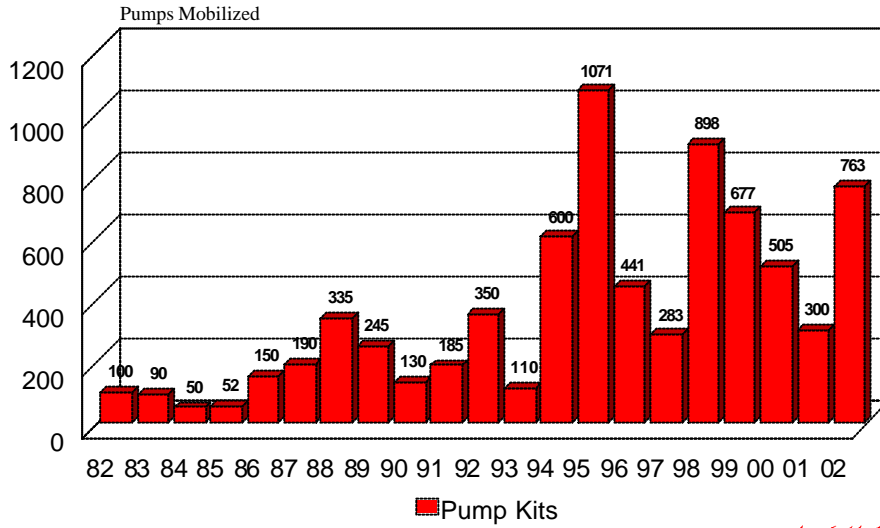
As of December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2002 there have been 0 forest fire related fatalities reported. The following table shows total fire related fatalities in years past.

### Forest Fire Related Fatalities

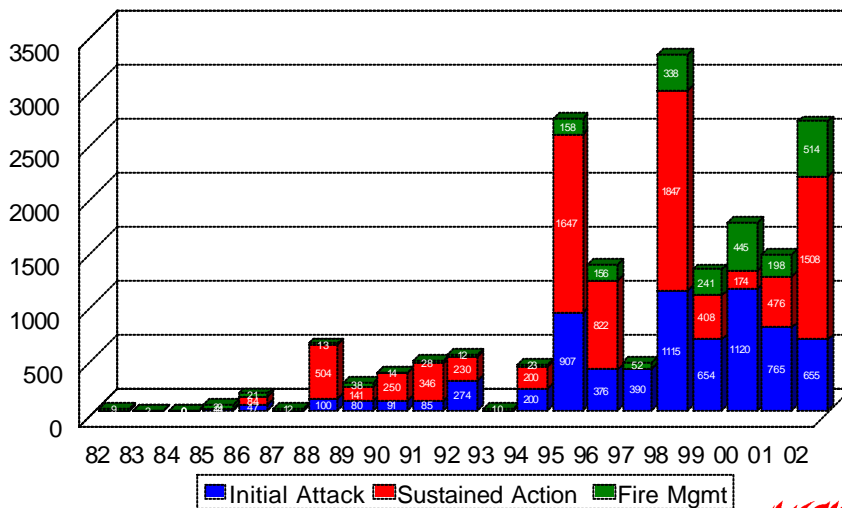
Year	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Fatalities	6	3	3	0	3	4	2	0	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	2	0

# Mobilizations 2002

## Pump Kits 1982-2002



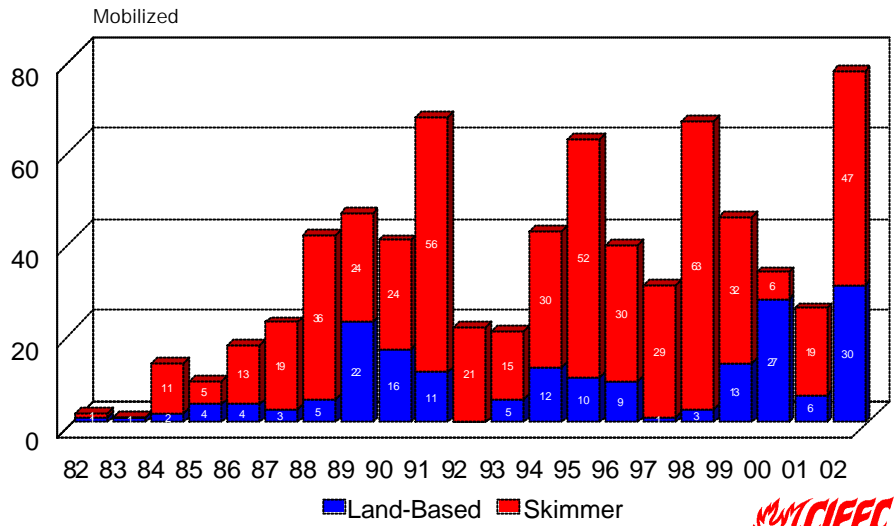
## Personnel Mobilized 1982 - 2002



## Mobilizations 2002

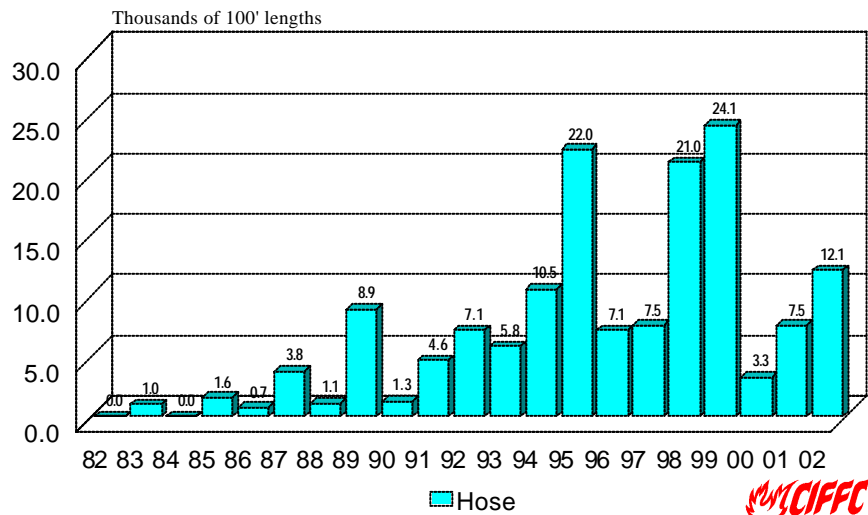
### Airtankers

1982 - 2002



### Hose

1982 - 2002



Wildfire Starts												
Total Number of Fires (Lightning & Human Caused)												
	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	Ave.	2002
BC	3,809	1,503	4,094	1,489	1,343	1,198	2,663	1,150	1,508	1,265	2,002.2	1,758
YT	117	136	255	148	149	112	196	160	55	68	139.6	69
AB	1,055	848	872	804	376	445	1,696	1,355	782	974	920.7	1,430
NT	285	469	627	215	350	105	399	170	275	127	302.2	88
SK	701	646	700	649	428	491	1,266	735	417	857	689	878
MB	298	239	555	663	423	373	516	612	353	538	457	754
ON	960	743	1,053	2,121	1,243	1,634	2,267	1,002	636	1,562	1,322.1	1,114
QC	765	542	499	1,265	1,250	876	854	1,037	516	1,003	860.7	895
NF	109	83	143	103	148	110	192	228	219	202	153.7	143
NB	576	430	516	546	367	368	288	606	333	490	452	317
NS	299	315	245	408	272	371	348	462	210	486	341.6	267
PE	27	29	43	29	25	34	26	34	26	34	30.7	29
PC	57	58	160	57	72	51	127	40	108	107	83.7	88
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,058</b>	<b>6,041</b>	<b>9,762</b>	<b>8,497</b>	<b>6,446</b>	<b>6,168</b>	<b>10,838</b>	<b>7,591</b>	<b>5,438</b>	<b>7,713</b>	<b>7,757</b>	<b>7,824</b>

Totals as of December 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2002	
<b>Full Response Fire Numbers</b>	7,148
<b>Modified Response Fire Numbers</b>	676
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,824</b>

Wildfire Hectares												
Total Area Burned in Hectares												
	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	Ave.	2002
BC	28,259	5,180	29,063	53,256	22,048	2,640	77,781	10,620	16,830	9,668	25,534.5	8,604.0
YT	30,123	86,115	411,397	257,280	105,935	10,120	385,579	185,956	7,651	17,772	149,792.8	35,700.0
AB	3,330	25,633	29,700	342,610	1,990	4,728	734,816	122,612	14,676	153,459	143,355.4	496,566.69
NT	36,950	858,577	3,085,977	2,827,367	371,545	126,532	1,459,360	550,046	177,814	111,262	960,543	27,089.17
SK	96,192	613,827	994,889	1,643,552	14,516	3,884	995,498	180,820	140,922	183,820	486,792	879,582.6
MB	433,773	67,275	1,469,258	803,299	116,724	35,009	408,918	121,826	86,129	86,199	362,841	81,174.0
ON	175,994	104,681	83,455	617,978	451,927	38,528	158,218	328,248	6,633	10,733	197,639.5	172,512.0
QC	27,112	128,243	116,035	727,727	691,590	393,079	418,318	97,747	39,205	33,068	267,212.4	1,012,785.6
NF	1,814	26,998	110,629	794	82,448	8,981	40,226	39,292	148,820	1,275	46,127.7	35,484.0
NB	5,071	551	462	472	1,770	178	303	1,211	336	604	1,095.8	246.4
NS	1,160	369	243	405	643	564	397	1,822	488	530	662.1	211.25
PE	44	87	22	36	196	107	77	77	29	27	70.2	132.3
PC	1,377	1,651	73,017	6,160	16,581	298	31,284	65,368	7,538	21,419	22,469.3	7,086.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>841,199</b>	<b>1,919,187</b>	<b>6,404,147</b>	<b>7,280,936</b>	<b>1,877,913</b>	<b>624,648</b>	<b>4,710,775</b>	<b>1,705,645</b>	<b>647,071</b>	<b>629,836</b>	<b>2,664,136</b>	<b>2,757,175</b>

Totals as of December 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2002	
<b>Full Response Hectares Consumed</b>	1,556,765.5
<b>Modified Response Hectares Consumed</b>	1,200,409.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,757,174.83</b>