

Welcome to today's newsletter for families and friends of Australian and New Zealand fire personnel deployed to the USA.

Our second deployment of ANZ firefighters have had another full day, travelling to fires in the USA and getting set up in base camps. See 'Stories from the Fireline' for details about their experiences.

The first deployment are currently enjoying some well-deserved R&R before starting the second stint of their deployment.

The following information aims to provide you with the latest situation in the US, including locations of ANZ personnel, maps, stories and helpful contacts.

Deployment Summary:

There are currently 93 Australian and New Zealand firefighters deployed to the USA fires. See the table on the third page for the current location of these ANZ members.

The ANZ deployments involve cooperation between a total of 29 organisations across Australia and New Zealand. These include crews deployed to the USA, organisational support for those crews.

Total Firefighters in USA

	Victorian	WA	NSW	ACT	TAS	NZ	Total
1 st Deployment (on R&R)	15	7	11	2	4	11	50
2 nd Deployment (Deployment to field), (includes 1 WA to join 1/9/06)	8	6	13	2	3	10	43

Weather Forecast:

A strong low pressure system will move into the Pacific Northwest today with windy conditions across much of the northwest quarter of the country through mid-week. The associated cold front will bring a chance of thunderstorms to eastern portions of the Northwest, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming Tuesday and Wednesday. Much cooler weather and higher relative humidity will follow the front Wednesday and Thursday with a chance of showers for Wyoming, and portions of Idaho and Montana. Scattered thundershowers are expected in Texas today with warmer and drier weather Wednesday through the end of the week.

Current report: 29 August 2006 (US evening) - 30 Aug (Melb morning)

Wildland fire activity was light with 121 new fires reported. Four new large fires were reported, two each in Idaho and Montana. Two large fires were contained in Texas. Very high to extreme fire indices were reported in California, Idaho, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington and Wyoming.



Stories from the Fireline

A message from the ACT's Hilton Taylor who arrived at the Columbia fire yesterday:

On August 28 at 09:30 a team of 17 Australians and 2 Kiwis were loaded on a bus and departed Boise, Idaho for Pasco, Washington. The trip took around 4 hours through some spectacular country. Those on board the bus were bound for the Tripod fire in Northern Washington (Matthew Flynn and Paul Kale - both of NZ) and the Columbia fire in South East Washington (Stewart Kreltszheim; Tom Kenneally; Phil Hamer; Bob Hagan; Peter Cecil; Robert Chalwell; Mark Cullen; Phil Goldberg; Murray Harrison; Vince Hilder; John McNamara; Trevor Reeves; Anthony Archer; Gerald Crawford; David Robson; Brian Smith; and Hilton Taylor - all from Australia).

We arrived at Pasco airport at around 14:00 where the Kiwis collected a hire car and departed (nervously) for the Tripod fire. The rest of us were informed that our vehicles had not arrived at the hire car company and we had a few hours to kill. Our bus driver was kind enough to take us back downtown where we were able to kill a few hours. Some of the group took the opportunity to make contact with family and offices.

On our return to the airport, around half of the 17 vehicles had turned up. It was decided that we would travel in two groups from Pasco to Waitsburg - around 1 hours drive. The first party headed off to ensure they would arrive in daylight (19:30) to set up camp, fill in camp registration forms and get the lie of the land. The second group arrived around 22:00 and were helped by the first group to get set up.

On Tues morning the group attended the 06:00 briefing and were assigned tasks (note most are still going through fireline orientation and final designation may change):

Ed: Please see table on page 3 for assignment details.

All Australian DVGS (*Divisional Group Supervisors*) and TFLDS (*Taskforce Leaders*) will shadow a current Divisional Supervisor or Taskforce Leader for their first shift as an orientation. This will be important today, as it is a "red flag day" with high winds, low humidity, dust and smoke haze and a max temp forecast around 85 degrees F. Extreme fire behaviour is predicted.

There are over 1000 people in the camp that has been set up at a horse racing track on the outskirts of the small town (less than 1000 people) of Waitsburg. The fire camp has more than doubled the population!!!

In all, the troops are feeling bit apprehensive but pretty positive.

Will keep you posted.

And this update came from Steve DeVoogd:

The Mt Hood fire is now largely contained. Reports of the activities by our Aussies and Kiwis (on line and in helicopter management) indicate a really solid performance by our team. The lads up here have put in a great effort in management and fire skill, and have earned the respect of their American peers. Activities over the past few days include a tricky backburn in extremely steep country. This took 2 days to safely complete and Kevin Ihaka played a key role in this. The long trek into another part of the fire has been made by Mike Grant for many days earning much respect for his tenacity and management skills. John Sutton was on Spike Camp for a few nights to manage the top section of the fire through the important blacking out phase. Mike Wright and Rob Turner joined the team here a few days ago after a really solid effort at the Blister fire. These blokes quickly found their feet in the Mt Hood area given the similar terrain and fuel types as the Blister fire.



Where are ANZ crews?

The first contingent of Australians and New Zealanders deployed to the US are currently enjoying a well-earned break, commencing rest and recreation (R&R) in Washington state (Seattle and Chelan) and Oregon:

First Deployment	Fire fighters/liaison
Rest & Recreation	<div> Alan Daw – WA Andrew Morrow – VIC Angela Loneragan – NSW Ashley Frank (leader) – NSW Barry Scott – VIC Brian Cartelle – NZ Field Liaison: Chris Irvine – TAS Craig Burley – NSW Darryl Burns – VIC David Nugent – VIC David Vaskess – VIC Dennis Matthews – VIC Ed Hatherley – WA Edward Te Kahika – NZ Evan Rarere – NZ Glenn Launt – NSW Ian Bounds – TAS Ian Dicker – NSW John Barnes – NZ John Duggan – TAS John Sutton – NZ Julian Armstrong – NSW Kevin Ihaka – NZ Liam Fogarty – VIC </div> <div> Mark Williams – NSW Matt Potter – VIC Michael Grant – NZ Michael Morley – VIC Michael Sullivan – NZ Michael Wright – WA Michal Priyima – NSW Neil Cooper – ACT Nicholas McCabe – NZ Paul Devlin – NZ Paul McCoughtry – VIC Peter Bidwell – WA Peter Driscoll – VIC Peter Gibson – WA Peter Windle – NSW Phillip Savage – VIC Robert Ratcliffe – TAS Robert Round-Turner – WA Rodney Simmonds – WA Russell Manning – VIC Scott Cashmere – ACT Shane Geerin – NSW Steve de Voogd – VIC Terence Auton – VIC Trevor Bullock – NZ Wayne Leader – NSW </div>

..... Deployment information continued overleaf.....



Second Deployment		Fire fighters/liaison
2nd Deployment: (Aircraft & Operations) Specific deployment details still to come.		Barrie Curtis – NSW Grant Olsen – WA Roger Armstrong (WA) (deployment 1/9/06) William Ellis – NZ
Trail Head	Fire fighters/liaison	Other Information
Fire no. 28 on US map	Bradley Lett – NZ Brian Taylor – NZ David Ingram – ACT Graeme McIntyre – NZ Greg Harry – VIC Peter Kearney – NSW Rachael Thorp – NZ Tim Sheppard – NZ Trevor Tidey – NZ	
Rattlesnake Complex	Fire fighters/liaison	Other Information
Fire no. 13 US on map	Brett Wagstaff – VIC John Webster – NZ Gavin Wornes – WA Russell Perry – NSW Garth Toner – NSW Julia Visser – NSW	Division Group Supervisor Taskforce Leader
South Fork	Fire fighters/liaison	Other Information
Fire no. 21 on US map	Peter Le Breton – NSW	
Red Mountain	Fire fighters/liaison	Other Information
Fire no. 23 on US map	Mark Read – WA Allan Rankin – VIC	Divisional Commander, Tango Sector Taskforce Leader
Tripod Complex	Fire fighters/liaison	Other Information
Fire no. 12 on US map	Christopher Banffy – NSW Glenn Burns – NSW Mathew Flynn – NZ Paul Kale – NZ	
Columbia Complex	Fire fighters/liaison	Other Information
Fire no. 17 on US map	Anthony Archer – VIC Brian Smith – NSW David Robson – TAS Gerald Crawford – TAS Hilton Taylor – ACT John McNamara – NSW Mark Cullen – TAS Murray Harrison – NSW Peter Cecil – VIC Phil Hamer – VIC Phillip Goldberg – NSW Rob Chalwell – VIC Robert Hagan – WA Stewart Kreltszheim – VIC Thomas Kenneally – WA Trevor Reeves – NSW Vincent Hilder – WA	

NOTE: Map on page 4 indicates location of fires by fire number.



Large Incidents - August 29, 2006



Prepared by Situation Mentoree Natasha McLean, with Situation Officer Amy Laird, 30 August 2006 (MELBOURNE time)

USA Local News

The second deployment group featured in a news article on TV station KTVB in Idaho. View footage at the following website <http://www.ktvb.com/sharedcontent/VideoPlayer/showVideo.php?vidId=84112>

For up-to-the-minute local news on the US fire situation, including a special mention of the ANZ contingent, check out www.nuggetnews.com



Helpful contacts

- The facts and figures on this newsletter will be updated daily. Family and friends are also encouraged to check the US websites for latest updates- www.nifc.gov/fireinfo/nfn.html
- Useful glossary of USA firefighting terms at www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/fire/glossary.html#fsto
- For map of major fires in the US http://activefiresfiremaps.fs.fed.us/lq_fire2.php
- Time zones - Australia is approximately 16 hours ahead of the western USA. New Zealand is 18 hours ahead.
- View a map of world time zones at www.worldtimezone.com
- Calculate time in USA relative to your location at www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/converter.html

Western Australia	Eastern Australia Vic, NSW, Tasmania	New Zealand	USA western-most states including Oregon & Washington State	USA Mountain daylight time including Montana & Idaho
8am Tuesday	10am Tuesday	12pm Tuesday	5pm Monday	6pm Monday

We will update this newsletter daily with new information.

In the meantime, if you have any concerns or questions please contact:

US Coordination Group (Melbourne)

Phone: 1300 13 4444 (local call cost, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

Email: us.coordination@dse.vic.gov.au

