

## Backgrounder: Wildfire MMAs and Compacts

Mutual Aid Agreements (MMAs) and compacts allow the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency to provide and receive assistance to address wildfires, such as personnel, equipment and aircraft when needed. Over the years, Saskatchewan has sent assistance as far north as Alaska, as far west as California, as far east as Newfoundland, and as far south as Texas. Saskatchewan has even assisted south of the equator in Chile and Australia.

### Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC)

The SPSA is currently part of the [Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre \(CIFFC\)](#), a non-profit organization run by federal, provincial and territorial agencies that manage wildfires. All agencies in CIFFC work together by sharing resources and information. CIFFC also plays a role in planning for fires over a long time, delivering programs and managing people involved in firefighting.

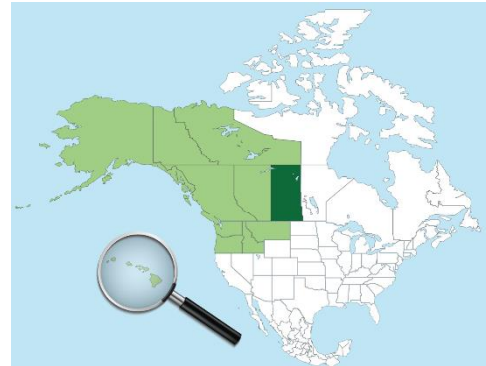
When the SPSA reaches out for support under this mutual aid agreement, the firefighters sent from CIFFC are all nationally qualified to fight fires in Canada and are trained to the same standards. It works the same way when the SPSA is asked for help under this agreement from other provinces - only nationally qualified firefighters are sent.

### Compacts

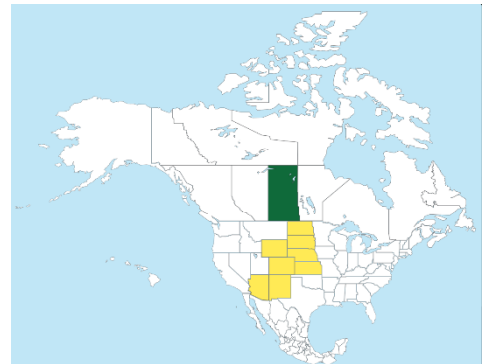
A compact is more about equipment and manpower for the situation and is more operationally focused. If the SPSA needs help today, our other members can help. We can accept resources from any other members – and we can send resource to any of them in need.

The SPSA is currently members of two compacts, the Northwest Wildland Fire Protection Agreement - NW Compact, and the Great Plains Interstate Fire Compact. In most cases, these compacts are connected by geography.

In a compact, there is no involvement of federal government from Canada or the USA (with the exception of national parks). The SPSA works with member states and provinces directly. This approach is more flexible because it allows the SPSA to adapt as needed. For instance, in CIFFC, if the SPSA requests two teams of four firefighters, it might receive two teams made up of firefighters who are qualified nationally. Through compact membership, if the SPSA asks a member state for two teams of four firefighters, they will discuss the requirements and gather the equivalent resources, which might involve a different arrangement and firefighters from other states in the compact. This works the same with equipment and other resources.



*The Northwest Wildland Fire Protection Agreement – NW Compact*



*The Great Plains Interstate Compact*

### **Alliance of Forest Fire Compacts**

As you can see by the map diagrams, there is plenty of the USA and Canada who are not a part of the compacts mentioned above. That does not mean the SPSA can't provide or receive assistance from those states. Through the Alliance of Forest Fire Compacts, we are all connected - indirectly. For example, while Illinois is not connected to Saskatchewan through any compacts, they are connected to Ontario through the [Great Lakes Agreement & Compact](#), and as such they are connected to Saskatchewan through CIFFC. These partners agree to accept each other's standards.

### **Other Compacts**

There are also additional federal-to-federal MAAs with other nations including the USA, Mexico, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. When resources come into Canada from these agreements, they are managed again through CIFFC. Saskatchewan has had short-term agreements from many other nations in the past when our need was dire, including France, South Korea and Chile.

Saskatchewan also has border agreements with NWT, Alberta, Manitoba and Parks Canada, and is a member of the non-wildfire [Northern Emergency Management Assistance Compact \(NEMAC\)](#) and Emergency Management Mutual Aid (EMMA) compact.