

Forest Fires Assessment and Advisory Team of Spain A jointly integrated approach for efficiency and solidarity

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ABSTRACT – Lately, wildfires don't know about countries, regions or seasons. In particular wildfire fighting presents a challenge mainly when large fires and simultaneity happen. This can make any suppression system to collapse and so solidarity is a must between regions or countries. Spanish geographical dispersion creates very different characteristics of wildfires along the country, what make experts to gather a huge variety of knowledge and experience. In order to take advantage of this, with the aim of integrating all experts capabilities to create a solid and integral response to any wildfire situation, Spain has developed a national data base of wildfire experts from all over the country to become members of a Forest Fires Assessment and Advisory Team (FFAT). The main purpose of this team is to support requesting regions on analytical, operational, safety or logistical aspects related to wildfires. This data base was created by the Spanish Forest Fire Service with the consensus of the National Wildland Firefighting Committee, including the definition of the database itself, the experts selection criteria and the standard operational procedures of the team. Simultaneously with the national process, at European Union level, in the framework of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM), Spain has registered this same team, to be deployed internationally, both for response and advisory mission. Despite we are already sharing ground and aerial forces in difficult situation, we strongly believe that by gathering the knowledge and experience accumulated at technical level and making joint efforts to support each other, we will be in a better position to face those challenging episodes by including an additional truly reliable tool which is not other than our wildfire experts from all over the country. This integrated and jointly approach suppose a qualitative step forward in the fight against wildfires by providing an added value in situations where local or national suppression systems are overwhelmed. At the same time is an expression of solidarity among wildfire community.

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