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A REVIEW OF INITIAL ATTACK FIRE CREW PRODUCTIVITY AND EFFECTIVENESS

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Abstract

Information regarding the productivity and effectiveness of initial attack fire crews is essential to a wide variety of forest fire management activities. This paper provides a selective review of crew productivity research conducted in Australia, Canada, and the United States and a cursory overview of how such information is used in computer-based fire management decision support systems. A description of several widely used rules-ofthumb that relate suppression effectiveness to fire intensity is presented as well as our understanding of how these guidelines may have evolved. This is followed by an example of some of the difficulties associated with transferring productivity and effectiveness information between fire management organizations and fire environments. The paper concludes with a discussion of strategies for investigating initial attack crew performance.

Keywords: Initial attack crews; Fireline construction; Fireline productivity; Suppression

effectiveness; Australia; Canada; United States
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