

MNICS AIR OPERATIONS WORKING TEAM – 2012 ASSIGNMENT WORKSHEET #16- Interagency Meeting Briefings

ISSUE: Clarification on 10 NM limitation for fires near the Canadian Border as detailed in the MN / ON border agreement.

BACKGROUND: During the Pagami Creek Fire different definitions of authorities relating to the 10 Nautical Mile language in the Ontario/MN Border Agreement existed.

RECOMMENDATIONS / EXPECTED PRODUCT: Query each agreement member agency for their interpretation of the 10 NM language. Be clear what each partners position is so that MNICS Air Support Group Supervisors know how to plan, organize and direct air operations.

A. Implementation Plan: Gather information and summarize into an easy to read synopsis is.

B. Tasked to:

a. Individual – Sheldon Mack

C. Target Completion Date: February 1, 2012

Clarification on 10 NM limitation for fires near the Canadian Border as detailed in the MN / ON border agreement. All MNICS partners were queried in relations to their interpretation of the language as listed below.

There shall be a “common zone” understood to exist for approximately 10 miles (16 km) on either side of the international boundary, which will be under observation by the Parties to this agreement. This area may be extended where any fire outside this zone is predicted to encroach across the Ontario / Minnesota border.

It was agreed by all parties that flexibility and discretion exists within the language as written. Specifically the yellow highlighted words above.

It was further agreed that an interpretation of the paragraph during the Pogami creek fire was much more restrictive than the language intends. The interpretation that an aircraft's *specific target* must be within 10 miles created hurdles for the overhead teams and pilots that were cumbersome.

While the paragraph should not be used to over reach the original intent it should also not be used to self - impose restrictions on fire response personnel.