

CDF Fire Apparatus Over The Years



The fire apparatus of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) have always been an essential tool for the agency to accomplish its mission of protecting California's citizens, forest lands and urban interface from destruction by wildfire.

The "State Division of Forestry" acquired one Moreland fire truck in 1928, and four more in 1929. Twenty-eight additional Ford fire trucks were acquired in 1930 and 1931. By 1934 162 vehicles were in the inventory. In 1938 the Davis Equipment Facility was in operation and assistant rangers were given winter work building fire trucks there. By 1945 the inventory had reached 733. Military surplus vehicles were widely used by CDF after WWII. In 1948, 61 Dodge crew trucks were added to the fire fighting fleet.

From the beginning to the present, great changes have been made. The fleet size reached 1,400 vehicles in 1961. Crew buses were added to the fleet in the early 1960s to transport Conservation Camp crews to projects and fires. Thirteen passenger Crew Carrying Vehicles (CCVs) built in the 1970s have evolved into 17 passenger, code 3 equipped, fully air conditioned Emergency Crew Transports (ECTs) equipped with automatic transmissions and retarders.

Over the last 50 year period many improvements have kept CDF fire apparatus in the lead for state of the art developments. Safety and operational innovations have made the CDF fleet one of the most effective in the world for protection of both the wildland and urban interface. Major improvements were made in the 1980s. Though some personnel used to ride on the back of engines, protected by roll bars, better, larger and easier to operate fire engines have since evolved featuring fully enclosed, air conditioned cabs for all



1926 Moreland



1930 Model A



Current Model 24



ECT



D6C dozer



Heavy transports ranging from the 1950s to 1960s.



Mobile Kitchen Unit

personnel to ride in safety and comfort. Two-stage, hydrostatically driven fire pumps developed in the late 1980s allowed for more versatile and effective fire fighting techniques.

Other mobile equipment has been added to the fleet as well. Modern 1,000 meal capacity Mobile Kitchen Units (MKUs) provide healthy and nutritious food on emergency incidents. Large Mobile Command Centers (MCCs) provide a full range of communications and statistical management information to more effectively handle the large variety of emergency incident work that CDF personnel are now asked to manage.

The bulldozer fleet has also undergone change. Enclosed, air conditioned cabs on bulldozers protect the operators from heat, dust and noise and provide a better environment from which to do their fire fighting work. CDF's dozer/transport fleet has seen minor upgrades from Caterpillar D6C dozers built in the 1960s to later model Caterpillar D6XL and D6M series high-track dozers with enclosed cabs. These upgrades have been accomplished through the timely purchase of low hour, used equipment and a number of new, higher horsepower, air conditioned transports.

Entering the new millennium, two-stage, 500 GPM, PTO operated fire pumps with 180 GPM diesel powered auxiliary pumps are being designed for fire apparatus and are currently built according to NFPA guidelines. The current fleet consists of over 2,800 vehicles which includes 383 front line fire engines in 12 different models, 237 crew buses and 58 bulldozers.

***More information on the
CDF Mobile Equipment Program
can be found on the CDF Website -
www.fire.ca.gov
under
Fire and Emergency Response.***

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