



VANDENBERG PROFESSIONAL FIREFIGHTERS
I.A.F.F. LOCAL F-116



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Vandenberg AFB - Amid what is expected to be a record fire season, Vandenberg Firefighters have begun to receive their furlough notices.

Firefighters from Vandenberg Air Force Base face an 11-week furlough beginning in July and extending through the end of September.

According to base officials, the furlough is being imposed on the firefighters due to federal budget cuts and the sequester.

“The furloughing of defense employees is a bad idea, but furloughing firefighters at the peak of fire season in Santa Barbara County, is a disastrous idea,” says Mike Provencio the President of Vandenberg Professional Firefighters.

In addition to the furlough of base firefighters, the Vandenberg Hot Shots have received notice that their positions will cease to exist at the end of the fiscal year. The Hot Shot program which has existed for 36 years, - after a fatal fire that killed the base commander, deputy commander, fire chief and a dozer operator – is one of the most popular Hot Shot programs in the region because of their heroic support they have provided during some of the State’s largest fires and most recently for their trip to Colorado last summer to help combat that State’s wildfires.

“At the end of September, the Vandenberg Hot Shots program will cease to exist and there isn’t much hope that the program will come back anytime soon. It just doesn’t make any sense for this base to be laying off Hot Shots, and furloughing firefighters all at the peak of fire season.”

“Without a hot shot crew or helicopter support anywhere in the county, it will take additional time for base firefighters to receive the help they need to combat the wildfires that threaten the base populace and hazardous chemical plants every year.”

For additional information, please contact Mike Provencio at 805-714-2274.