Beat: News

FRANCE ON FIRE: HISTORIC HEAT, 32,000 HECTARES BURNED FIREFIGHTING ON PROGRESS

A BLAZE AT FONTAINBLEAU NEAR PARIS

Paris, Washington DC, 13.07.2026, 22:18 Time

USPA NEWS - France is now facing a double crisis: a historic heatwave and an early, unusually intense wildfire season, with fires already burning more land than in all of 2025 and a major blaze now at the gates of Paris in the Fontainebleau forest.
France's summer of 2026 has tipped from heatwave emergency into full?scale wildfire crisis. More than 32,000 hectares have already burned since January more than in the entire year 2025 and an "exceptional" blaze is now tearing through the Fontainebleau forest, south?east of Paris, forcing highway closures and mobilising hundreds of firefighters and water?bombing aircraft. At the time of publication, the fire in the Fontainebleau forest is still advancing and has not yet been fully contained. With limited numbers of professional firefighters on site, the battle against this mega fire is being fought hour by hour, supported by civil protection teams, aerial resources and many civilian volunteers who have come to reinforce the line and help protect homes, forest land and critical infrastructure. (Source Tf1, Reuters, Info.fr)

AN "EXCEPTIONAL" FIRE AT THE GATES OF PARIS, FONTAINEBLEAU FAMOUS FOR ITS ROYAL CASTLE
In Fontainebleau, a historic royal hunting forest and showcase landscape for France, a wildfire described as "exceptional" in scale has already burned well over 1,000 hectares between 800 and 1,300 hectares depending on the latest updates making it the largest forest fire ever recorded in Ile?de?France. Interior Minister Laurent Nunez says two main fronts have been identified: a primary front that has ravaged around 1,200 hectares and a secondary one that has consumed about a hundred hectares. At the same time, the country is discovering in real time the limits of its firefighting infrastructure: an ageing fleet of Canadairs that will not be renewed before 2028, fewer firefighters on the ground than in previous seasons, and a fire season that experts say has started two to three weeks earlier than usual under the pressure of unprecedented heat. (Source Assemblee-nationale, French Parliament, Reuters, Youtube)

The blaze forced the closure of major transport axes, including long stretches of the A6 motorway, and disrupted high?speed rail traffic on the Paris–Lyon line after cables were damaged by fire. Around 500 to 800 firefighters have been mobilised on this fire alone, supported by water?bombing aircraft deployed from southern bases a first in the Paris region as well as helicopters and observation planes. Volunteers and local residents have also joined efforts on the ground, providing water, logistics and support to exhausted crews.

SUSPECTED ARSON AND 58 PYROMANIA RELATED ARRESTS NATIONWIDE
Interior Minister, Laurent Nunez has openly raised the possibility of deliberate arson in Fontainebleau, noting that about ten separate ignition points were identified within a perimeter of about 1,000 meters, a pattern that investigators consider incompatible with a single accidental origin. Two suspects have already been arrested in connection with the Fontainebleau fires, and nationwide, 30 adults and 29 minors have been taken into custody over alleged deliberate or accidental fire?setting, with seven people currently in pre?trial detention after admitting they lit fires voluntarily.
Overall, civil protection officials estimate that nine fires out of ten in France are of human origin whether through negligence, imprudence or arson. On one recent Sunday alone, around 250 fire starts were recorded across the country, about 30 of them almost simultaneous, highlighting both the scale of the phenomenon and the difficulty of distinguishing between coordinated acts and the cumulative effects of extreme heat and drought.

A SEASON RUNNING WEEKS AHEAD, AND A FLEET STRUGGLING TO KEEP UP
According to the director?general of civil security, Julien Marion, France has already seen more than 8,000 fire outbreaks in 2026, and more than 32,000 hectares have burned twice as much as by the same date in 2025, with July alone already exceeding the entire month of July last year. Prime Minister Sebastien Lecornu admits that the fire season is running at least two to three weeks ahead of its usual schedule, with vegetation as dry as it would normally be in late July or early August.

Against this backdrop, questions resurface about the country's airborne firefighting capacity. France currently operates 12 Canadairs with an average age of around 26 years, some delivered in the mid?1990s, and their wear?and?tear in high?stress water?scooping operations has led to repeated maintenance?related unavailability.

After the catastrophic fires of 2022, the president announced a "rapid rearmament" plan to expand and renew the fleet to 16 new?generation aircraft. In practice, parliamentary scrutiny has shown that the first new planes will not be delivered before 2028, and that the interim solution relies heavily on leased helicopters and light bombers, at a significant cost to the state.
(Source : Assemblee-Nationale, le Monde

FROM EXCEPTIONAL INCIDENT TO NEW NORMAL
In this context, the summer of 2026 is less an anomaly than a preview. As heatwaves and wildfires merge into a single, continuous season, France is discovering what it means to manage major fires not just in the south, but at the gates of its capital with a Canadair fleet that will not be fully renewed for years, fewer firefighters on the ground and a growing reliance on volunteers and local solidarity to hold the line.
The "exceptional" fire in Fontainebleau is not just a tragic episode in a showcase forest; it is a warning that the country's landscapes, infrastructures and institutions are entering a new era of vulnerability. Unless prevention, enforcement, climate adaptation and resources on the ground are finally treated as parts of the same strategy, France will keep learning, blaze after blaze, how quickly a spark can turn into catastrophe. (Reuters, TF1, Info.fr, Ouest France, Franceinfo, Assemblée nationale, etc.).

Article online:
https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-27027/france-on-fire-historic-heat-32-000-hectares-burned-firefighting-on-progress.html

Editorial office and responsibility:
V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDStV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): RACHDI Rahma, Jedie Foster

Exemption from liability:
The publisher shall assume no liability for the accuracy or completeness of the published report and is merely providing space for the submission of and access to third-party content. Liability for the content of a report lies solely with the author of such report. RACHDI Rahma, Jedie Foster

Editorial program service of General News Agency:
UPA United Press Agency LTD
483 Green Lanes
UK, London N13NV 4BS
contact (at) unitedpressagency.com
Official Federal Reg. No. 7442619