



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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September 22, 2007

In Reply Refer To
9214 (P)
CA-160

To: Tim Smith, Bakersfield Field Manager

From: Tom Sherman, Team Leader

Subject: Expanded (72 Hour) Report,
Canebreak Rollover, Engine 3144

Injured employees: Engine Operator. Minor injuries
Fire Fighter. Minor injuries

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS PRLIMINARY AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE:

Preliminary Factual Findings: On September 19, 2007 at 1600 hours (PST), Two BLM fire employees from the Bakersfield Field Office were responding to a Wildland Fire. They were traveling southbound on Canebreak Road, 8.1 miles from HWY 178 and lost control of the BLM Light Engine 3144. While coming out of a right turn in the road, the back dual tires came upon a soft portion of road bed, causing the vehicle to swerve to the left. Taking evasive action, the driver first pulled right and then to the left again. The rear wheels then dropped into the uphill side sandy ditch and forced the vehicle to swerve off the road and over the right side of the embankment. The vehicle rolled twice side over side before coming to rest approximately 62 feet below the embankment.



Narrative: Responding Code 3 to the Tuttle incident, the accident occurred approximately 6 ½ hours into the shift. During questioning, the driver indicated that engine was traveling at approximately 30-40 MPH on a poorly maintained dirt road.

Upon departure of the right turn, the road straitens and is a one to three percent up hill grade; the road travel way is 19 feet wide and did not fail or giveaway.

Seatbelts were worn by both driver and passenger. The BLM Engine Operator and one fire fighter were transported by ambulance to a local hospital, and were treated and released with only minor injuries.

Work rest ratios appear not to be a factor into the accident. There does not appear to be any mechanical failure responsible for the rollover. Weather was clear and slightly overcast with no apparent distractions while in route.

The BLM Law Enforcement Officer and the California Highway Patrol accident investigation reports are still pending.

/s/ Tom Sherman, Team Leader

cc:

BLM-California Safety Manager

National Office of Fire and Aviation Safety Manager

California State Fire Management Officer