



United States
Department of Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington Office

14th & Independence SW
P.O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code:

Date: September 20, 2006

Route To:

Subject: Preliminary (24-hour—after the accident) Briefing

To: Steve Borchard BLM CDD District Manager

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS PRELIMINARY AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Location: Highway 138 / 4000 ft level road

Date of occurrence: September 20, 2006

Time of occurrence: 0850 Hours

Team leader: James Aragon

Mission: Fire Suppression / Initial Attack

Activity: Travel

Number injured: 2

Number of fatalities: 0

Property damage: Due to the rollover, the BLM Water Tender sustained major damage and appears to be a total loss.

Narrative: On 09/20/06, BLM CDD Water Tender 3690 was involved in a single vehicle rollover accident. The BLM driver and passenger were returning to the Apple Valley Fire Station traveling westbound on Hwy 138 at approximately the 4000 ft level access road and as the driver attempted to negotiate a corner she lost control of the vehicle. The vehicle entered the eastbound lane turning over onto the drivers' side.

The California Highway Patrol initiated an Accident report at the scene. Upon initial assessment, the water tender appears to have been fully loaded, at the time of the collision. The vehicle was at the time blocking the eastbound lane so it was necessary for it to be drained and towed from the scene to the Apple Valley Fire Station.

Both BLM personnel were ground transported to the Loma Linda hospital via ambulance to be checked out. The passenger was released at the hospital with no apparent injuries. The driver was however held overnight for precautionary reasons.

An accident investigation team comprised of BLM and USFS staff is being put together for the formal AI.
cc:

Safety Manager (at the level authorizing the investigation)



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File Code: 6730

Date: September 22, 2006

Route To:

Subject: Expanded Briefing

Pinnacles Incident; Mountain Top RD; San Bernardino NF, Region 5
September 20, 2006

To: Jeanne Wade Evans, Forest Supervisor, San Bernardino N.F.

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS PRELIMINARY AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Name of injured: Two

Property damage: Sustained major damage to a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Water Tender

Preliminary factual findings: On September 20, 2006 at 0900 BLM Water Tender 3690 was involved in a single vehicle rollover accident. The BLM driver and passenger were returning to their duty station after a 24 hour initial attack assignment on the Pinnacles fire. Both BLM Personnel were ground transported to a local hospital via ambulance. The passenger was released with minor injuries. The driver was held over night for further assessment and was released September 21, 2006.



Narrative:

The water tender operator and passenger drove the 3,500 gallon water tender back to duty station; Apple Valley fire station; after working a 24hr initial attack assignment to take their required rest.

In the process of traveling westbound on Hwy 138 the driver of the water tender negotiated several hairpin turns with a full tank of water. Coming up to a turn at an estimated speed of 25 to 30 mph, in 5th gear low, the water tender started hopping and when the operator tried to stop it by trying to apply the brakes and downshifting, the brakes faded fast and the operator tried to grab a lower gear, but could not and was in neutral.

At the 4000 ft level access road the driver attempted to use brakes and noted they were not working. To stop the water tender from going over the cliff the operator cranked the wheel as hard as the driver could intending to make the turn. Going around the turn the truck was overcome and did roll over on the driver's side. The vehicle entered the eastbound lane. California Department of Forestry CDF E- 3586 called for medical assistant and CDF E- 3519 administered first aid to the operator & passenger. The water tender operator had multiple contusions to left arm and right leg and passenger had suffered strains to both arms. They both were ground transported to the Loma Linda hospital via ambulance to be checked out. The passenger was released at the hospital with strains to both arms. The driver was assessed overnight and was released September 21, 2006.

/s/Michelle Reugebrink

Chief Investigator

cc: Dave Edgar, Regional Safety Manager

