



File Code: 6730

Date September 13, 2013

Route To:

Subject: 72 Hour Preliminary Information Report, Schoolhouse Mesa Fire Accident

To: Lenise Lago
Designated Agency Safety and Health Official

Number and Type of Injuries: One fatality **Name:** Token Adams

On the afternoon of August 30th, 41 year old US Forest Service Engine Captain Token Adams was killed in an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) accident while searching for a lightning caused fire. A Learning Review Team has been assigned to the incident and the review is underway.

Narrative:

Late in the afternoon of August 29th a crew member aboard a military aircraft reported a possible wildland fire. The location of the reported fire was estimated to be in Cebolitta Canyon on the Jemez Ranger district, Santa Fe National Forest, in the vicinity of an older fire that crews had believed to be no longer active.

At approximately 0900 on August 30th, three firefighters (Token Adams among them) responded to the general location of the reported smoke. Each of the firefighters brought an ATV. After a briefing concerning the search strategy they each separately began scouting the area. Their first mission was to confirm that the older fire was no longer active and a possible source of the smoke report. This mission was completed and the three met back at their trucks around 1030. Their second mission was to broaden their search area to locate the new fire. They discussed the broader search area and each left separately on their ATVs. Each communicated with each other periodically by two way radio to coordinate the search. Communications were also made with a lookout who was working on a nearby lookout tower and the Santa Fe Interagency Dispatch office.

At 1344, Captain Adams communicated by radio with other firefighters concerning the status of the search. After this time, calls to Captain Adams went unanswered. At about 1500 the new fire was located by one of the firefighters and he called, via radio, to Captain Adams and the third firefighter to respond to the new fire. With no response from Captain Adams, suppression on the new fire was halted and all efforts were then directed towards contacting and locating Captain Adams. Within three hours a formal Search and Rescue operation was ordered which involved numerous, volunteers, state, federal and local government personnel. His body and the ATV were found on September 6th.

Preliminary analysis indicates Captain Adams was thrown from his ATV as he negotiated over a slight rise and then the ATV flipped onto Captain Adams resulting in fatal injuries. Captain Adams was known to be a skilled ATV rider, he was properly trained and certified as an ATV operator, and he was wearing all appropriate personal protective equipment.

/s/ Liz Agpaoa,
Learning Review Team Leader

cc: Steven C Schlientz, Mary Wagner, Calvin Joyner, David Ferrell, Steve Holdsambeck

