

BLUE SHEET

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

Preliminary Summary Report of Serious CAL FIRE Injuries, Illnesses, Accidents and Near-Miss Incidents



Near Miss – Dozer Power Loss

July 7, 2013

Chariot Incident

13-CA-MVU-014084

13-CA-MVU-014229

California Southern Region

This Preliminary Summary Report is intended as an aid in accident prevention, and to provide factual information from the first 24 hours of the accident review. To that end it is published and distributed within a short time frame. Information contained within may be subject to revision as further investigation is conducted, and other reports and documents are received.

Lookout

Communications

Escape Routes

Safety Zones

SYNOPSIS

The following is a Preliminary Summary Report of a near miss incident where a CAL FIRE dozer experienced a mechanical issue which resulted in a reduction of power. The operator was not able to withdraw from an oncoming fire front.

NARRATIVE

On July 7, 2013, MVU dozer operator on D3341 was constructing dozer line on the Chariot Incident, east of Sunrise Hwy near Pioneer Mail Campground on the Cleveland National Forest in San Diego County. While the operator of D3341 was constructing indirect fireline he experienced a mechanical issue with D3341 which resulted in approximately a 50% reduction of power.

The operator of D3341 was building indirect fireline on a hilltop with fire below when he experienced a reduction in power with D3341. The operator of D3341 was directed by his Dozer Strike Team Leader to construct a safety zone and remain in the safety zone until the fire burned around him. The operator of D3341 was able to construct the safety zone on the leeward side of the hilltop. The operator maintained constant communication with the Dozer Strike Team Leader which allowed coordination of four water drops from a Type 1 helicopter onto D3341's position. Subsequently, the fire burned around D3341's safety zone.

The dozer operator was uninjured and there was no damage to the dozer. The operator of D3341 walked his dozer off of the fireline and to his dozer transport after the flame front had passed.

Safety Issues for Review

- ✓ Ensure Situational Awareness at all times.
- ✓ Ensure equipment is in good working condition.
- ✓ Ensure safety zones and escape routes are constructed and identified.
- ✓ Base all actions on current and expected fire behavior.
- ✓ Review operating guidelines and Unit training records associated with the John Deer 750J Series, 2012 (new dozer)