



United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
Fort Apache Agency
Whiteriver, AZ



PRELIMINARY (24-HOUR) REPORT

FROM: Lynn Polacca, BIA, Fort Apache Agency Deputy Superintendent

TO: Lyle Carlile, BIA, National Interagency Fire Center, Fire Director

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS PRELIMINARY AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

LOCATION: Diamond Fire, Whiteriver, AZ

DATE OF OCCURRENCE: July 24, 2011

TIME OF OCCURRENCE: Approximately 0600 hours (Arizona Time)

TEAM LEADER (POSITION): Incident Commander, Type 4

ACTIVITY: Wildland Fire Suppression

NUMBER & TYPE OF INJURY: 1, Fatality

NARRATIVE:

The lightning caused Diamond Fire was reported to Show Low Dispatch on Saturday, July 23rd, 2011 at approximately 1200 hours Arizona time. The location of the fire was confirmed by a helicopter to be north of the Black River on Fort Apache, approximately 2.5 miles northeast of Ten of Diamonds Ranch.

The Fort Apache Helitack and Fort Apache Hotshots were dispatched as Initial Attack resources and were flown to a helispot located on a ridge top on Patty Butte near the fire start. Terrain in the area is steep and rocky with a dense woodlands fuel type. Following completion of a handline around the approximately 35 acre fire all resources hiked back up to the helispot (spike camp). As resources returned to helispot, the Incident Commander determined that one firefighter was not accounted for and initiated a search to locate the missing firefighter. The firefighter was in possession of a handheld radio and attempts to contact him throughout the evening were not successful. After several sweeps of the area, law enforcement from local, county and state agencies were requested to assist with the search efforts. Search efforts continued throughout the night until the missing firefighter was found deceased at 6:18 am.

A Critical Incident Stress Management and a Serious Accident Investigation Team have been ordered.

SUBMITTED BY: Lynn Polacca, BIA, Fort Apache Agency, Deputy Superintendent