

Cannon Incident, NV-HTF-1228
June 17-25, 2002
Western Great Basin
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Lessons Learned

1. WHAT WAS THE MOST NOTABLE SUCCESS AT THE INCIDENT THAT OTHERS MAY LEARN FROM?

Operations

- The realistic timing of mobilization and ETA allowed for safe travel to, and efficient transition of the team into the incident.
- The day of transition (shadowing) allowed operations to complete a thorough size-up of the incident and develop the strategy that addressed the growth of the fire while smoothly integrating the ongoing suppression tactics.
- Integrating the Type II team overhead into the Type I team organization allowed the operations section to stay ahead of the power curve.

Plans

- Using a snap server to hold the database (.mdb) and having UPS on all hubs/switches
- Plans and Ops worked well, Charlie helped with interaction/training, Resources were happy with the coordination
- Ordering a self-contained GIS staff was a big help as we stayed up with the demand vs. always trying to catch up

Finance

- Use of local resources - PTRC & EQTR positions were in need and the forest was able to provide initially two PTRC's then an EQTR who happened to be a forest budget analyst. Individual provided great knowledge from forest perspective. All stayed during the team's duration.
- Military medical personnel - very responsive to helping out.
- Receiving the Forest's source books for both medical services and emergency equipment rental agreements.
- Section cohesion and ability to communicate well to overcome challenges.

Logistics

- The location of the vehicle wash station worked out very well. It was a gravel area with shallow soils. A suggestion would be for Forests to identify vehicle wash station areas and set them up on preseason agreements.
- Utilizing outdoor carpeting for the kitchen area for dust abatement worked very well. It is much more cost effective than using wood chips or other similar products and much easier to maintain. CAUTION: When ordering carpeting, make sure that you specify **outdoor** carpeting not indoor/outdoor carpeting.
- Having an Incident Medical Team assigned to the team greatly increases the abilities to serve the firefighter and provides consistent staffing within Medical Unit.

C&GS

- Web site utilized frequently; served as "fast" tool for info dissemination.
- Camp Newsletter was great tool for information and delivering "safety" messages.
- Cross training within the info center was optimized for all trainees and qualified officers.

- Able to donate fire incident photos for documentation purposes.
- Allowing trainees to assume more responsible roles enhanced internal team support.
- Establishing information centers in Minden, Walker and ICP broadened info outreach and info interchange, and enabled rumors to be diffused more expeditiously.
- NTSB's immediate response to media, e.g., providing press conference relieved media pressure from info centers and answered inquiries more expeditiously.
- Local Forest PAO support provided critical "local" information needs. Including provided invaluable link to State Senators, Congressional Delegates and County Commissioners.
- Welcoming "local" information officers to the information staff enhanced local knowledge base and understanding of community concerns.
- Kathy Lucich – Bridgeport District Ranger, was very supportive Ranger who was always "on site." Bridgeport District FMO and AFMO were always available.
- Chuck Vickery, FBA; provided tools for firefighters to apply fire behavior awareness (Keep qualified FBA on board).
- Compliments to Charline Deese-Resource Unit Leader for thorough and detailed tracking of resources.
- "Standards for Survival" was offered to drivers.
- Providing the "Six Minutes for Safety" message was successful and having our meetings developed around it was successful.
- Human Resource folks; Jacquelyn Oakes and Bob Reed did a great job on this incident. Exemplified their passion for what they do and utilized their skills to effectively help folks in need.
- Success of Safety Team members to overcome the difficult fire situation upon arrival by applying immediate and effective safety methodologies.
- Team "jelled" when Team came into the "tragedy". Team members took care of each other and progressed into management of the incident effectively.
- Team came in with strengths and was able to convey the Team was here to be a support and help.
- Having CISD helped members of the fire organization up front.
- Providing a Memorial Service for the firefighting contingent and an opportunity to donate to a memorial fund was helpful and provided closure for folks.
- NTSB provided press conference at crash site, which expedited response to media queries. Minimized impact on information center.
- Clearly defined "take back" standards.
- American Red Cross engaged very quickly with community during tragedy; providing great community support and relief.
- Commend local Line Officer and Resource by using knowledge/awareness to call in Type II and Type I teams for this incident. Smart decisions.
- Excellent job of Line Officer and Resource Advisor(s) being available to the Team(s).

2. WHAT WERE SOME OF THE MOST DIFFICULT CHALLENGES FACED AND HOW WERE THEY OVERCOME?

Operations

- Effects of the Air Tanker incident. Prompt CISD action was implemented. Repeated follow-up by the Human Resource Specialist's was very beneficial in helping personnel deal with the effects and maintain a safe focus on the fire suppression mission.
- Weather alert notification to the line were hampered by communications system and lack of protocol. Information was successfully passed but took too much time to confirm.
- Develop acknowledgement protocol for alerts.

Plans

- June release of ISUITE was used. The team experienced numerous bugs within the applications. Running IRSS reports we would have random resources disappear then occasionally reappear, however running the same report in access (by linking the tables) the reports ran flawless. In ITS time would be posted for the 6/17-25, upon trying to run the 288 report it left off the first two days. In ICARS, resources would just disappear and had to be inputted 3-4 times. Costs would merge with another resource.
- The inability to get a Training Specialist for the incident
- A lot of duplicate resource order numbers were occurring. Resource orders were not being updated from expanded. Ordering and expanded dispatch not reconciling the records. Issue with California and being off a Nevada number, ordering (not expanded) issuing the request numbers.

Finance

- Unknown scope of Buying Team - mitigated by meeting with group to review procedures for procurement of services. Should have been reviewed initially when Team arrived.
- I-Suite Database Records - should have reviewed and analyzed database prior to implementation. Overcome by using work-arounds and restoring records so it was useful to the team.
- Local medical services not up to speed with government medical procedures.

Logistics

- Traveling with 2 unit leaders in most of the units in the section allows us to be up and operational when we arrive. This also allows us to manage the work rest ratio in the initial stages of incident base development or when emergencies occur.

C&GS

- Identified need to get someone in camp who can train the drivers. ("Standards for Survival").
- Joy Augustine and Kent Contreras identified that filling out the 215A is very difficult and time consuming. (Current version will be converted from MS Words to Excel.)
- OES qualifications; Safety relayed that person on board was good employee however, did not have red card qualifications. (Challenge: Need to get policy info to demob about which agency(ies) do or do not issue red cards, such as OES in the state of CA. What are policies in other states? (Unresolved: Non-recognition of NWCG red card requirements; specific to this employee or any employee with OES going out of the state of CA).
- HR/Team never heard from IC when debriefings occurred regarding crash. HR didn't know whom to help because they didn't know, nor were informed who needed help. (Solution: 1) HR recommends we need to learn how to slow down the process to get this information; 2) Recommend Team establish a branch for HRSP of our own (e.g. what worked before on other incident was having Forest manage CISD) and 3) Have clear oversight picture/plan.
- Another challenge was needed to determine who was in charge of the crash site. (Solution: Realize it was an incident within and incident and treat as such).

- How to provide personal relief to team members or firefighters who witness or experience tragedy. (Solution: Train HR Leaders in CISD and grief/counseling training as one solution. Caution in this; that HR Leaders don't assume entire role Assign someone to the fire, if needed, that is already trained in this area.
- Getting beefed up with information officers was difficult. (Solution: Primary IOF1 with two IOF1 trainees; pre-cut order of additional IOFR's).
- Short of "line qualified" information officers. (Solution: Get IOF1's line qualified).
- National media attention impacted information center initially due to lack of staffing. (Solution: Have a pre-strategy outlined and bullet statements prepared for this type of incident)
- Public meeting hosted with USMC-MWTC, Team, and Agency Administrator was strained due to lack of control in "lead" role/facilitation. (Solution: IC, IOF1 and Deputy IOF1 meet ASAP to outline strategy and methodology for managing public meetings).

3. WHAT CHANGES, ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS ARE RECOMMENDED TO VARIOUS TRAINING CURRICULUMS?

Operations

- Develop a session for specialized resources such as helitack and IHC crews on Incident Management Team function and process. The session would provide an understanding of planning processes, logistical support considerations, and decision-making processes.

Plans

- Standardize the ICS-211. Issue with the 14 day and the work/rest ratio, Team is being forced to create our own format
- More training on the ISUITE program, train folks on the electronic database on how to input data, what to do and what not to do (PTRC, CDER, EQTR,RESL, SCKN)
- 'Planning Ops' position needs to be addressed. Look at including this position into the Planning and Operations Section Chief training
- Demob taskbook concentrates to much on the 'plan', emphasis on different/other tasks
- GIS Technical Specialists should attend the basic fire school and perhaps have fireline qualifications to have further knowledge on understanding

Finance

- CTSP's should have subject matter topic on IRSS relationships with ITS and ICARS.
- PTRC/EQTR's should have exposure to the Incident Time System.

Logistics

- Self study courses for Receiving and Distribution Managers may not be enough. There are many requirements that cannot be learned through the self-study course such as the requirements for handling, storage and disposal of hazardous materials.
- Refresher courses for all logistics units, similar to the food refresher that is put on by the contracting officer at NIFC. These refresher courses could be developed and presented at the annual National Logistics Workshop. The refreshers needed would be for GSUL, SUPL, FACL and SECM. The COML, FDUL and MEDL do annual refreshers. These refreshers would need to be recognized by NWCG and part of the red card requirements. The FDUL/COTR refresher is not recognized by NWCG as a recommended training for FDUL.

C&GS

- Train HR Leaders in CISD and grief/counseling training as one solution. Caution in this; that HR Leaders don't assume entire role assign someone to the fire, if needed, that is already trained in this area.

- Website task book needs to be developed.
- Ensure Info trainees are provided website training or other training needed to balance info quals.
- Need a qualified/trained employee on board, if they are assigned to serve as liaison for grieving families.

4. WHAT ISSUES WERE NOT RESOLVED TO YOUR SATISFACTION AND NEED FURTHER REVIEW? BASED ON WHAT WAS LEARNED, WHAT IS YOUR RECOMMENDATION FOR RESOLUTION?

Operations

- Existing radio communications equipment can not support the communications requirements of large fires in complex terrain. Competition for airtime on the command frequency is affecting prompt tactical communication on the line. Use of the satellite radios system helped to reduce the demand but does not address the issue with fire line personnel.
- Pre-cut orders do not seem to be honored by receiving units.

Plans

- “Engine typing” during ordering and demobing. Three different TYPE guides (fireline handbook, this areas mob guide, and pocket book). When ordering engines suggest type 3 4 5 as they are very similar. Resolution is to have one NATIONAL typing guide for engines, so were all looking at one typing

Finance

- Team agreement to review ISUITE standards of operation was not accomplished. Problems encountered with the system need to be discussed as a group and an action plan outlined with how to mitigate known problems. At the minimum, meetings need to be done at the beginning and end of the incident.

Logistics

- Buying Teams renting expendable items instead of purchasing. This continues to be an issue annually and on almost all incidents. On this incident the buying team rented extension cords and surge protectors. Fifty extension cords rented for one week will end up costing the incident \$2,000. An example from last season was the rental of a padlock, wheelbarrow and scoop shovel. Other examples are coffee pots, and fax machines.
- There is an ongoing issue with supplying contract crews and engines with supplies from the cache. Contractors are showing up without a copy of their contract or their inventory and requesting supplies. When their order is denied they become upset, but in most cases if they referred to their contract specifications they would not be entitled to the items they are requesting. There needs to be National direction instructing all teams and Supply Unit Leaders how to deal with the issuance of supplies to contractors, as well as a letter sent to each contractor explaining that if they do not have a copy of their contract and their starting inventory that no supplies will be issued to them, and if they do have a copy of their contract that only the supplies allowed will be issued.
- Battery issue out of the cache is new to the supply unit. A method similar to the fuel issue sheets needs to be developed for the issuing of batteries to contract crew and engines. We need a way of tracking the batteries and getting that information back to finance.
- Replacement ordering by contract crews is also an issue. Contractors continually expect to place and receive replacement orders through the cache. The fact that a contractor needs to place a claim on his invoice for damaged items on the fire does not seem to be clear to all folks involved.

C&GS

- Need for more satellite radios.
- (Unresolved: Non-recognition of NWCG red card requirements; specific to any employee with OES going out of the state of CA).
- Unresolved: Primary Team info officers can't spend time out on the line. Need to request line qualified info officers.)
- Unresolved. Did not have key contact number to turn to from Forest, in order to answer queries regarding fire investigation.
- Unresolved. Local structural protection plan needs to be in place before Team arrives.
- Offer CISD, counseling, or Employee Assistance Program to firefighters. How extensive to outreach. (Immediate solution: Counseling was offered to firefighters. IC will dialogue at next Command and General Staff meeting. Additionally, IC will confer with Line Officer and Forest Supervisor to be aware of potential employee needs who drive by crash site to and from work).
- Do we need to plan for next disaster(future fatality fires) (Thought: Clearly define expectations of how to handle disasters).