

Wildland Fire Lessons Learned Center

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To: William Kaage, Chair, National Wildfire Coordinating Group

From: Dave Christenson, Acting Center Manager

Subject: 2009 Annual Summary Accomplishments, Wildland Fire Lessons Learned Center (LLC)



LLC Key Accomplishments in 2009 for the Interagency Wildland Fire Community

- ❖ The LLC staff made approximately 6,340 contacts at meetings, conferences, workshops, seminars, and wildfire academies throughout the United States. Another 300 contacts occurred at international wildland fire conferences in Sundsvall, Sweden and Gerona, Spain, where LLC staff presentations highlighted organizational learning and high reliability organizing (HRO).
- ❖ Three *Scratchline* newsletters were researched and published:

<http://www.wildfirelessons.net/Scratchline.aspx>



Logistics Lessons Learned – Issue 26

The LLC staff interviewed eight Logistics Section Chiefs—from across the United States—regarding unresolved issues in the Logistics Section, as well as these individual’s notable successes, difficult challenges, effective safety practices, and training recommendations.

Liaison Officer Lessons Learned – Issue 25

The LLC staff interviewed seven Liaison Officers and Liaison Officer Trainees—from across the United States—regarding their notable successes, difficult challenges, effective safety practices, and training recommendations.

Crew Boss Lessons Learned – Issue 24

Eight Crew and Squad Bosses—from around the United States—were interviewed by LLC staff regarding crew training recommendations and unresolved issues in supervising squads and crews, as well as these people’s notable successes, difficult challenges, and effective safety practices.

- ❖ Two Information Collection Team (ICT) reports were finalized, distributed, and posted to the LLC Web site:

Northern California 2008 Lightning Siege Initial Impressions Report

This comprehensive ICT report is an examination of lessons learned from the extensive “Lightning Siege” that occurred in Northern California in 2008. The report—based on the premise that by reflecting on and analyzing past performances, we can improve both personally and organizationally—examines:

- Fire resource allocation priority processes by Geographical Area Coordinators and Multi-Agency Coordinating Groups,
- Utilizing Incident Management Teams in unique roles,
- The “Theatre of Operations” concept, and
- The use of Task Forces.

http://www.wildfirelessons.net/documents/Initial_Impressions_NorCal_2008_Lightning_Siege.pdf

Georgia 2007 Wildfires and HRO Implementation Initial Impressions Report

This ICT report explores the lessons learned and effective practices surrounding HRO implementation by the Georgia Forestry Commission and its interagency partners in the aftermath of the 2005 Managing the Unexpected Workshop (co-sponsored by the LLC) held in Jacksonville, Florida. This report focuses on the Georgia Forestry Commission's actions during the severe 2007 fire season.



http://www.wildfirelessons.net/documents/GA_2007_Wildfires_HRO_ICT.pdf

- ❖ In 2009, to help promote the Federal Fire and Aviation Safety Team's online "Six Minutes for Safety" program, the LLC now features these offerings—that, on a daily basis, address the high-risk situations that historically place wildland firefighters in harm's way—on its Web site. These presentations include the new "This Day in Wildland Fire History" lessons learned summaries.

<http://wildfirelessons.net/uploads/6mfs/home.html>

- ❖ During 2009, the Incident Reviews database on the main LLC Web site (www.wildfirelessons.net) gained another 43 new incident reviews, investigations and reports—for a total of 961. In addition, 81,700 users viewed the incidents in this database during the year, reflecting an increase of 17,706 users over our 2008 total. This database is maintained in cooperation with NWCG's Risk Management Committee.

- ❖ Over the past year, 136 new "Neighborhoods" were added to the LLC's popular on-line community center (www.myfirecommunity.net). We now host a total of 512 "Neighborhoods" that successfully link a diversity of wildland fire community factions, including: interagency hotshot crews, smokejumpers, engine and crew contractors, dispatchers, planners, fire behavior analysts, incident training specialists, fuels committees, fire ecologists, and fire effects monitoring group planners. In 2009, 1,400 new members joined these various wildland fire-related Neighborhoods, for a total of 8,200 current members.

- ❖ The LLC's continually growing Incident Management Team Web site (www.IMTcenter.net) welcomed 20 new member Incident Management Teams during 2009. This popular online "Team Center" site now hosts 105 teams, including Area Command Teams, Fire Use Management Teams, National Incident Management Organization Teams, IMT Types 1-4, fire prevention teams, and state teams. This convenient "Team Center" site provides these IMTs with a place and means to set up and maintain their own Web sites—without the need for a Webmaster or special software training. The Team Center includes calendars, team rosters, photo galleries, and secure file sharing for these teams, as well as their public audiences. In addition, these IMT members can now maintain their contact and availability information in a secure, private part of their team's site.



- ❖ In October 2009, the Lessons Learned Center cosponsored the *High Reliability Organizing in Wildland Fire* workshop—and its companion St. Sebastian Prescribed Fire Burnover Staff Ride—with The Nature Conservancy, Florida Park Service, and Central Florida Prescribed Fire Council. Approximately 60 people attended, representing various wildland fire agencies from 14 states.
- ❖ Three short firefighter lessons learned educational videos were completed and posted to the LLC Web site—for convenient downloading and viewing—as part of the second year of the LLC’s



Image from the “What Can You Learn from Their Experience? – The Story of Survival Inside a Vertical Rotating Plume: Lessons Learned from the Indians Fire Entrapment” video.

Firefighter: Remember This video series. The NWCG Risk Management Committee members served as subject matter experts on all three of these productions:

- **What Can You Learn from Their Experience? – The Story of Survival Inside a Vertical Rotating Plume: Lessons Learned from the Indians Fire Entrapment**
- **Close Call – What You Can Learn from the Ahorn Fire Shelter Deployment**
- **Remembering Eva – What You Can Learn from Firefighter Eva Schicke’s Death on the Tuolumne Fire**

<http://www.wildfirelessons.net/Additional.aspx?Page=131>

- ❖ An additional 24 *Learning from the Experts* video podcasts were added to the LLC Web site in 2009, for a total availability of 44 of these videotaped interviews with key experts in fire use, prescribed fire, fire behavior, and the 1988 Yellowstone Fires. This ongoing Fire Management Learning from the Experts Project was initiated to capture the experience of our seasoned employees acknowledged by their peers to have exceptional expertise in planning and implementing fire programs. <http://www.wildfirelessons.net/Additional.aspx?Page=153>

- ❖ During 2009, the LLC also completed the following video learning products for the wildland fire community:

- **Standing Accountable: Lessons Learned from Cerro Grande – Paul Gleason’s Insights on Type 3 IC Decision Making and Other Lessons Learned**
<http://www.myfirevideos.net/Default.aspx?CategoryID=1&SubCategoryID=3&VideoID=275>
- **I am a Wildland Firefighter – Aircraft is My Tool: Lessons**

Learned from Air Tanker Pilot Bill Waldman
<http://www.myfirevideos.net/Default.aspx?VideoID=215>

- **Complex Burning in a Complex Environment – The West Overlook Prescribed Fire Escape Staff Ride**