



NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP

National Interagency Fire Center
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MEMORANDUM

Reference: NWCG#023-2010

To: NWCG Committee Chairs and Geographic Area Coordinating Group (GACG)

From: NWCG Chair *William Raage*

Date: April 29, 2010

Subject: Dutch Creek Accident – Key Messages

On July 25, 2008, a firefighter working on the Iron Complex Fire on the Shasta-Trinity National Forest in California died as the result of a tree felling incident. A Serious Accident Investigation Team was convened to study the incident and provide a factual report to an interagency Accident Review Board (ARB). The Dutch Creek Accident Investigation Report was completed and presented to the ARB in July, 2009.

The ARB accepted the report and recommended eight corrective measures to be taken by wildland fire agencies to prevent similar accidents from occurring in the future. Those recommendations have been outlined in the Dutch Creek Serious Accident Tasking Plan. In the Plan, six of the recommendations were assigned to NWCG and two were assigned to individual wildland fire agencies.

To respond to their six recommendations, the NWCG Executive Board assembled an interagency Dutch Creek Serious Accident Task Team (Task Team) in February 2010. The Task Team has representatives with expertise in risk management, operations, command, and dispatch. The Task Team is in the process of developing a Plan of Action to address each of the recommendations. The intent is to have guidance and protocols in place by the 2010 western fire season.

The following key messages offer a summary of the status of the situation:

- The Dutch Creek Serious Accident Task Team is made up of interagency representatives from the wildland fire community with diverse expertise to provide an interagency responsive, collaborative approach to resolve the findings from the Dutch Creek Accident Investigation Report and Accident Review Board recommendations.

- The Task Team is working on a Plan of Action which will include operational guidelines to address the recommendations in the Dutch Creek Serious Accident Tasking Plan to prevent similar accidents from occurring in the future.
- NWCG guidance and modifications to operational procedures, resulting from the Dutch Creek Serious Accident Plan of Action, will be provided to agency administrators, incident management teams, unit dispatch, and geographic coordination centers for implementation in the 2010 fire season.
- The two agency specific recommendations will also be completed by the 2010 fire season.

Specifics of the Dutch Creek Accident Investigation, the Factual Report and other reports are located at http://www.nps.gov/fire/fire/fir_wil_fatality_investigation_dc.cfm.

cc: NWCG Executive Board