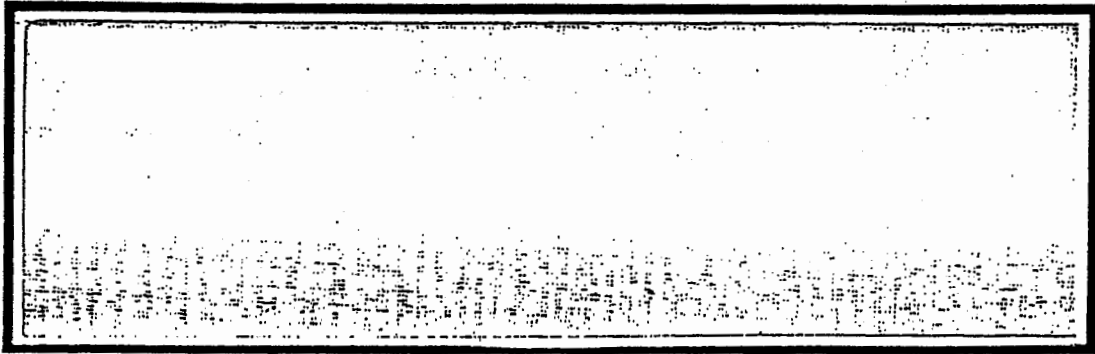




United States
Department of
Agriculture

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL



REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

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REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

FILE NUMBER: [(b)(2)]

DATE: June 9, 2004

TITLE: [(b)(6) / (7) (C)]

North Fork Ranger District, Salmon-Challis
National Forest, FS
North Fork, ID

"Title Continues"

CASE TYPE: Forest Service Firefighter Burnover Fatalities

SPECIAL AGENT: [(b)(6), (7)(C)]

Phoenix AZ

APPROVED BY: [(b)(6)]

J.J. CROWLEY
Special Agent-in-Charge

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TITLE CONTINUED

[(b)(6), (7)(C)]

North Fork Ranger District and Middle Fork Ranger District
Salmon-Challis National Forest
North Fork, ID

[(b)(6), (7)(C)]

Salmon-Challis National Forest, FS
Salmon, ID

[

Salmon-Challis National Forest, FS
Salmon, ID

]

JACK TROYER, Regional Forester
Region IV, Forest Service
Ogden, UT

[(b)(6), (7)(C)]

North Fork Ranger District, Salmon-Challis National Forest,
North Fork, ID

[(b)(6), (7)(C)]

Indianola Helitack Crew, Salmon-Challis National Forest
Moscow, ID

[(b)(6), (7)(C)]

Salmon-Cobalt Ranger District, Salmon-Challis National Forest
Salmon, ID

[(b)(6), (7)(C)]

Salmon-Cobalt Ranger District, Salmon-Challis National Forest
Salmon, ID

PREDICATION

On July 22, 2003, Forest Service (FS) helitack firefighters, JEFF ALLEN, Salmon, ID, and SHANE HEATH, Melba, ID, died of a burnover while engaged in fighting the Cramer wildland fire on the Salmon-Challis National Forest (SCNF) approximately 25 miles northwest of Salmon, ID. An Office of Inspector General (OIG) investigation was initiated in accordance with Federal statute (Title 7, United States Code, Sections 2270 b and c), which directs that:

“In the case of each fatality of an officer or employee of the FS that occurs due to wildfire entrapment or burnover, the Inspector General of the Department of Agriculture shall conduct an investigation of the fatality.”

BACKGROUND

The Cramer fire started on July 19, 2003, from a lightning strike. After notification was received about the deaths of FS employees JEFF ALLEN and SHANE HEATH, OIG special agents were dispatched to the scene and arrived in Salmon, ID, on July 23, 2003, to begin the investigation. Federal investigators from the Office of Safety and Health Administration and officials from the FS initiated their investigations the same day. The FS has a standing internal policy, documented in its “Accident Investigation Guide,” which states:

“The causes of most accidents are a result of failures to observe established policies, procedures, and controls...often, accident investigations reveal existing hazards that were not adequately addressed, therefore, the purpose of FS accident investigations is to provide management with information for accident prevention.”

On January 12, 2004, the FS issued its “Accident Investigation Factual Report” and the companion “Management Evaluation Report,” which document the FS findings regarding the Cramer fire fatalities. Copies of all documents and interview transcripts compiled by the FS safety investigation team were provided to OIG. Additionally, copies of documents and interviews from an “Administrative Fact Finding Inquiry” conducted by a private company contracted by the FS were obtained and reviewed.

The OIG investigation documented a similar set of facts relating to the Cramer incident as those presented in the FS reports. Attached are the “Cramer Fire Timeline” (Exhibit 1) and the “Resources on the Fire” (Exhibit 2) as prepared by the FS Accident Investigation Team and appended to their AIFR. Also attached are the Glossary of Wildland Fire Terms (Exhibit 3).

Forest Service Firefighting Procedures

The FS maintains an inventory of firefighting equipment, which includes large, fixed-wing aircraft called air tankers that are equipped to drop fire retardants or suppressants directly on a fire; “smokejumpers” that are designed to carry personnel that will parachute in to fight the fire; and helicopters that provide reconnaissance, deliver firefighting crews to strategic locations surrounding the fire, and drop fire suppressants where air tankers might be inefficient. The FS uses the term “helitack” to refer to its use of helicopters during the initial stages of a fire. It uses the term “helibase” to refer to the main location within an incident area for parking, fueling,

maintaining, and loading helicopters, and it uses the term "helispot" to designate a temporary helicopter landing spot beneath a fire.

The FS also maintains a staff of managers and field personnel trained to control and extinguish forest fires. Each firefighting crew is composed of personnel with at least the same specific level of training, and each fire is designated according to its severity and the training needed to control it. A Type IV fire, the lowest designation, indicates a fire during its initial stages. If the fire spreads and becomes more complex, it is designated a Type III fire, then a Type II, and finally a Type I, the most severe. Within this system of fire designations, there are five levels or types of crews running from less to more skilled: Type III, Type II, Type II-Initial Attack (IA), Type I, and Type I Interagency Hotshot Crews (IHC).

In addition to an inventory of firefighting equipment and a staff of trained firefighting managers, the FS also has specific guidelines for responding to wildfires. Those responding to a wildfire in 2003 were expected to follow the policies and procedures set forth in the "Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations 2003." The handbook established a reference for current operational policies, procedures, and guidelines for managing wildland fire and fire aviation operations and also expected all employees who were engaged in fire suppression activities to adhere to those standards and mitigate risks defined in the "Incident Response Pocket Guide." These two handbooks provided the framework and program directives to safely and effectively respond to wildland fire. The handbooks discuss strategies and tactics for initial attack and define the Incident Management System, under which an incident commander (IC) becomes responsible for all incident command level functions and incident activities. For a Type 3 incident, the IC usually has a significant number of resources available. The IC commands the various fire crews, each of which have crew supervisors (bosses), and/or helicopter crews, each headed by a helicopter crew manager. The IC also supervises logistics personnel on the fire.

The Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations 2003 handbook further provides that firefighter safety comes first. The handbook states in part... "the Ten Standard Firefighting Orders are firm. We don't break them, we don't bend them. All 18 Watch Out Situations must be mitigated before engagement or reengagement of wildland fire suppression activities. Every firefighter has the right to know that his or her assignments are safe. Every fireline supervisor, every fire manager, and every administrator has the responsibility to confirm that safe practices are known and observed." The Ten Standard Firefighting Orders and the 18 Watch Out Situations are attached as Exhibits 4 and 5, respectively.

Finally, the above-listed resources and firefighting standards are utilized on each National Forest according to a Fire Management Plan. For the SCNF, the Fire Management Plan defines the implementation of the fire management program on the Forest and is a detailed program of action to carry out the fire management policies to achieve resource management and fire protection objectives. All wildfires will be subject to an initial response. All ignitions determined to be human caused will be suppressed using an appropriate management response. Natural ignitions will be suppressed unless they are located in an area that has an approved wildland fire use plan. The Frank Church - River of No Return Wilderness is currently the only area with an approved fire use plan.

Law Enforcement Response to Fatalities

[(b)(6), (7)(c)] Lemhi County, Idaho, stated that [] and a deputy along with FS personnel had removed the bodies of ALLEN and HEATH from a ridge below Long Tom Lookout and above Cache Bar on the Snake River on the morning of July 23, 2003. [] provided a copy of the Coroner's Report, which stated, in part, that "ALLEN and HEATH died July 22, 2003, while performing their duties with the United States Forest Service. Cause of death was by fire." An autopsy was conducted on the body of SHANE HEATH by [(b)(6), (7)(c)] Ada County, Idaho Coroner's Office and determined that HEATH'S cause of death was thermal injury secondary to a forest fire. Further, toxicology tests showed no presence of controlled substances or intoxicants. No autopsy was conducted on the body of JEFF ALLEN.

On July 25, 2003, Senior Special Agent [(b)(6), (7)(c)] OIG, and Special Agents [(b)(6), (7)(c)] and [(b)(6), (7)(c)] Law Enforcement and Investigations, FS, located the origin of the Cramer wildfire and determined that its cause was a lightning strike (Exhibit 6).

Two broad areas of concern were developed from documentary and testimonial evidence obtained during the OIG investigation that were found to have contributed to the Cramer fatalities: (1) FS employees whose actions/inactions contributed to the fatality incident, and (2) the poor performance of the private sector firefighter contract crews assigned to the Cramer fire.

This report focuses on the FS employees whose actions or inactions contributed to the fatalities. The second area of concern (contract crews) is summarized briefly at the end of this report but is the subject of another OIG investigation [(b)(2)] and will be reported in detail in a separate supplemental report under that OIG investigation.

DETAILS

For clarity, this report is sectionalized, as follows: FOREST SERVICE EMPLOYEES; and CONTRACT FIREFIGHTER CREWS. The first section, Forest Service employees, is subdivided by employee whose actions or inactions contributed to the fatalities during the Cramer fire. Exhibit 7 is a diagram that documents the position assignment of each of those employees and the Line of Command/Responsibility during the Cramer fire. The second section of the report summarizes the issues surrounding the FERGUSON contract fire crews assigned to the Cramer fire.

Agent's Note: During the summer of 2003, there were numerous wildland fires on the SCNF. The Bobcat fire started approximately July 11, 2003, and was controlled within a short time. The Crystal and Blackwall fires began a few days before the Cramer fire and were active, but separate, fires when the Cramer began. All of these fires utilized resources from the SCNF. Throughout this report, various witnesses make reference to some of these fires.

FOREST SERVICE EMPLOYEES

[(b)(6), (7)(C), (D)(2), (K)(3)]

A review by the Reporting Agent (RA) of FS procedures related to wildland fire suppression, including the National Thirtymile Hazard Abatement Monitoring Plan, shows that the IC on a wildland fire has specific responsibilities for strategies and safety. These responsibilities include:

- Provide for safety and welfare of all personnel and the public.
- Develop and implement viable strategies and tactics.
- Monitor effectiveness of planned strategy and tactics.
- Execute suppression actions when and where they are effective.
- Ensure that all firefighting actions are in full compliance with the Ten Standard Fire Orders and the mitigation of applicable Watch Out Situations have been accomplished.
- Immediately delay, modify, or abandon firefighting on any part of a wildland fire where strategies and tactics cannot be safely implemented.
- Maintain command and control of all firefighting resources.
- Ensure that the IC on Types 1-3 wildland fires have no collateral duties, except for those of unfilled Command and General Staff positions.

[(b)(6), (7)(C), (D)(2), (K)(3)] Northfork Ranger District, SCNF, at the direction of [] attorney, declined to be interviewed by OIG agents. [] was interviewed during the accident investigation by FS personnel and by a private investigation contractor during an administrative fact finding inquiry. This section first establishes the work experience and environmental conditions known to [] on the day of the Cramer fire. Finally, the specific issues relating to [] are listed, followed by supporting evidence.

Work Experience and Training in Fire Behavior and Suppression

A review of [(b)(6), (7)(C), (D)(2), (K)(3)] personnel and training records obtained from the FS by the RA showed:

[] began [] career with the FS in [] In [] [] was assigned to a helitack crew. [] spent the ensuing years at various assignments, all directly related to fire. In [] [] became the [(b)(6), (7)(C), (D)(2), (K)(3)] for the North Fork/Middle Fork Ranger District, SCNF, ID. Throughout [] career with the FS, [] completed extensive training courses in various aspects of fire management and suppression, including Behave/burn Subsystem, Intro to Fire Effects, Intro to Wildland Fire Behavior, Incident Commander Extended Attack, IC Type 3, Fire Suppression Tactics, and Advanced Fire Behavior Calculations. [] actively participated in numerous wildfire suppression efforts. [] Training and Qualifications Master Record shows that, in addition to other positions, [] is experienced and/or (Red Card) qualified in a wide range of fire positions, including:

[]

[] had on-the-job experience and was qualified as ICT3 as early as 1997. [] current qualifications as ICT3 became effective []

Knowledge of Extreme Fire Conditions and Cramer Fire Growth

A review of the FS Accident Investigation Factual Report (AIFR p.7) shows a description of the extreme fire danger and severe summer conditions present on July 22, 2003, on the Cramer fire.

[] North Fork/Middle Fork Ranger Districts, SCNF, declined to be interviewed by OIG agents. [] provided a statement (Exhibit 8) to the AIT in which [] said:

On Sunday, July 20, 2003, [] learned from [] that the Cramer fire was burning on [] district. On Monday, July 21, 2003 [] whom [] supervised, informed [] that [] had told [] to be the [] on the Cramer Fire because they could not locate [], who was originally designated to be the []. [] would instead be the []. [] felt that [] was qualified for the assignment and was safety conscious.

[] provided a statement (Exhibit 9) to the FS Accident Investigation Team (AIT), in which [] said:

[] learned of the existence of the Cramer Fire on Sunday, July 20, 2003, and was told by [] that [] was the []. The following morning, [] was unable to reach [] and [] told [] to go to the fire and talk to [] who was the [] at that time on the fire. [] arrived at the Cove Creek helibase at approximately 1100 hours, Monday, July 21, 2003, received a briefing from [] and flew a reconnaissance of the fire. In the afternoon, the winds picked up, snags were falling, and the fire doubled in size. [] ordered everyone off the fire. [] then spoke to Engine 422, which had been sent to patrol the river road. Private vehicles were parked along the road, and the fire was burning down toward Cache Bar.

On the morning of July 22, 2003, [] of the Oregon Regulars fire crew; and [] flew reconnaissance of the fire. [] did not request a spot weather forecast that day. At a briefing back at the helibase, [] told the crews that the winds had been getting stronger in the afternoon and that Long Tom lookout reported that humidity was 11 percent lower than the day before. The Fire Danger Cards deal with fire history as it relates to the burning index. "The burning index being above the 19 percentile is when you get the large fire growth. They're a tool that's used as a trigger point as to when you're going to get large fire

growth. I believe we were above the 19 percentile... We're going to get the afternoon winds so expect the fire behavior to pick up in the afternoon."

On the afternoon of July 22, 2003, the fire was backing down toward Cache Bar, which is a boat ramp, and it was pretty much directly in line with the fire. The only indication of any fire heading toward H2 was "those guys (rappellers) saying they had smoke..." at the helispot above the Cramer fire.

A review by the RA of the Great Basin Incident Organizer form (Exhibit 10) bearing [] name showed the existing organization and available resources, and certain environmental conditions at 6:30 a.m., July 22, 2003. A major portion of the form was not completed. [] noted on the checklist that [] had completed an Incident Complexity Analysis, Risk Management Process, and Infinite Response Pocket Guide Briefing Checklist. [] noted that the relative humidity was under 20 percent, wind speed was 10 to 20 mph, slope was over 30 percent, and it was a south aspect. All of those conditions were in the red (hazardous) column on the form.

[] provided a statement (Exhibit 11) to the AIT and provided a statement (Exhibit 12) during an administrative fact finding inquiry (INQUIRY). [] said, in substance, that the conditions on the Cramer fire for July 22, 2003, were the same as the day before except a little hotter and drier. This information came over the radio from Long Tom Lookout at about the time of the IC's briefing. Everyone knew what the conditions were. They knew they were in "the extreme of the extreme." The Energy Release Components were very high.

[] SCNF, provided a statement (Exhibit 13) to the AIT in which [] said the fire conditions on July 22, 2003, were the "worse conditions you can be in." [] thought everyone knew the conditions. The relative humidity was at one time at 4 percent, "I mean, that's low," and it was 100 degrees.

Use Due Caution and Circumspection in Strategies and Actions

The following are a series of actions and/or inactions attributable to []

Control of Forces and Give Clear Instructions

Standard Firefighting Orders #8 and #9 (Exhibit 4) state that fire managers must give clear instructions, ensure instructions are understood, and maintain control of their forces at all times.

[] Challis RD, furnished a signed-sworn statement (Exhibit 14) in which [] stated that on July 11, 2003, [] was assigned as the [] on the Bobcat fire. [] made bad calls and was very indecisive. [] pointed out to [] that some cottonwood trees were falling onto the roadway and someone was needed to block traffic. [] volunteered to be "road guard," which was totally inappropriate since [] was the [] and would not be able to perform [] duties while performing that task [] was looking for

someone else to take over, even though [] was the [] When someone advised [] that FS trucks were in danger of burning [] said, "It's OK, that's why the Government has insurance."

[] provided a statement (Exhibit 15) to the AIT in which [] said [] was the [] on the Cramer fire. When [] arrived on the fire on the morning of July 22, 2003, the [] who was at the helibase and not on the fire, told [] to start putting water on the fire. There was "...really nobody on the fire that could give us any kind of direction on what needed to be done. We just kind of worked it out among ourselves, on what needed to be taken care of." In the afternoon, [] observed that there were no lookouts for H2. "Somebody that was in charge should have been on the radio, you know, been on the fire himself to see what was actually going on." There was no action plan of what to do "if various cases arose." [] felt [] was to just "freelance."

[] provided a statement (Exhibit 16) to the AIT in which [] said [] had been going through a rough divorce and [] mind was not really on things. "It's obvious that [] not thinking clearly...and [] was just adrift from the beginning in my opinion. [] was just kind of floating around and sitting in the helitack truck [] just thought [] might want to go up on the hill (fire) instead of taking a recon whenever [] felt like it [] don't think [] should have been there."

[] provided a statement (Exhibit 17) to the INQUIRY in which [] said the [] was not on scene at the Cramer fire, and communications from the on-scene person and the [] was not adequate enough to understand the urgency of what was happening on the fire.

[] stated (Exhibit 12) that [] was negligent because no lookouts were posted for H-2 personnel, [] did little on the 22nd (July 22, 2003) to actually oversee the fire's operation, and [] morning briefing was insufficient. The [] was unprepared on the 22nd and failed to provide safe and effective management.

[] in the statement (Exhibit 9) to the AIT and in an additional statement (Exhibit 18) to the INQUIRY, said [] was the [] on the Cramer fire and acknowledged being disengaged from the fire, managing it on July 22, 2003, from the helibase 13 miles away. Further, [] talked about miniscule duties performed during the Cramer fire rather than concentrating on fire suppression and safety. On July 22, 2003, [] spent most of the day at the Cove Creek helibase. [] took two reconnaissance flights over the fire, one at about 0830 and another at 1330, but did not actually go on the fire itself. [] know [] should have been on the fire, but [] felt like [] had a competent individual up there to run the crews and run the operations. [] was back...doing logistics.. [] had nobody there to order...meals, water, and ice." Additionally, [] had discussions with a lookout tower about a refrigerator.

Acceptable Safety Practices

Watch Out Situations #9 and #11 (Exhibit 5) caution about building fireline downhill with fire below and having unburned fuel between you and the fire.

[] in a statement to the AIT (Exhibit 19), [] in a statement to OIG (Exhibit 14), and [] in a statement to OIG (Exhibit 20) said, in substance, that they are each experienced [] It was unsafe and not an accepted practice or strategy to insert rappellers above a fire. [] added that fire burns rapidly uphill. "You don't put people above the fires; you just don't do it, especially in the Salmon River breaks. It's just not done. Normally, a mid-slope fire in this fuel type will burn to the top of the ridge before anyone has an opportunity to do anything with it."

[] SCNF, who declined to be interviewed by OIG agents at the direction of [] attorney, provided a statement (Exhibit 21) to the AIT in which [] said, historically, a fire that starts in the canyon will burn to the top of the ridges and will burn downhill to the river at some point. Whether it's that day or 5 days later, it's going to get there, just because of the sheer ruggedness and steepness of the terrain.

[] said (Exhibit 18) although [] placed rappellers at the top of a hill at H-2, nobody said "no" to [] decision.

Acceptable Safety Zones

Standard Firefighting Order #4 (Exhibit 4) states that the firefighters have escapes routes and safety zones and make them known. Watch Out Situation #11 (Exhibit 5) cautions about unburned fuel between you and the fire. According to the Incident Response Pocket Guide, the safest place to work is generally next to an already burned area ("the black"), into which a firefighter can escape.

[] provided a statement (Exhibit 22) to the AIT in which [] said that [] made the decision about the location of H-2 and about the safety zones. The "black" was about 200 yards below H2.

[] said (Exhibits 9 and 18) the safety zones were about 250 feet below H2 either in the black (burned) area east of the ridge or in a grassy area west of the ridge. [] acknowledged the danger of this situation by saying, "I know - fire below and having a safety zone below the fire..." [] did not realize the unburned safety zone would exhibit intense fire behavior.

Posting of Lookout

Standard Firefighting Orders #2 and #5 (Exhibit 4) state that you know what your fire is doing at all times and you post lookouts when there is a possible danger.

[] stated (Exhibits 17 and 22) that [] was supposed to find a lookout for H-2 across the (Salmon) river but had not done that. On the morning of July 22, 2003, during the reconnaissance flight, [] and [] discussed looking for a lookout and looked at several locations where a lookout could be posted. The location that was selected would have had a view of H-2 but not of the Cache Bar drainage.

[] said (Exhibits 9 and 18) that [] assigned [] as the lookout near H-1, a helispot on the lower southeast side of the fire where crews were being shuttled in by helicopter. [] did not know exactly where that lookout location was. [] had planned to get a second lookout flown in, but never did. [] did not post a lookout for the west flank of the fire. Although air attack and Lead Plane 41 were over the fire, "they weren't serving as lookouts." [] acknowledged that no ground lookout was posted for H-2.

Adequate Communication

Standard Firefighting Orders #3, #6, #7, and #10 (Exhibit 4) state that one must base all action on current and expected behavior of the fire; be alert, keep calm, think clearly, act decisively; maintain prompt communications with your forces, your boss, and adjoining forces; and fight fire aggressively having provided for safety first.

The RA reviewed the radio logs and the interview statements taken by the AIT. The review revealed that at no time did [] or others on the fire inform the rappellers at H-2 that the fire had spread into the Cache Bar drainage below and west of their location. [] did not question the rappellers about the reason for the extensive time delays to complete the H-2 clearing; [] did not communicate to them that the fire activity was increasing to the point that H-1 was overrun; [] did not attempt to extract the rappellers at the appropriate time; and [] did not order the rappellers to their safety zones when [] knew the fire had active fronts.

[] provided a statement (Exhibit 23) to the AIT in which [] said [] monitored the conversation between [] and [] during the afternoon reconnaissance flight of the Cramer fire on July 22, 2003.

[] was on the west side of the fire and expressed concerns to [] that the fire had "slopped" over and was under H-2. [] told [] that the fire that [] had observed down below had already crossed over the bottom of that little drainage. It had gone over there and was really widespread. It was widening out and climbing up the whole slope. It was starting to go and was creating a lot of smoke.

[] provided a statement (Exhibit 13) to the INQUIRY in which [] said [] told [] who was on an afternoon helicopter recon of the Cramer fire that the fire was increasing in activity. Further, [] told [] [] and [] crews were pulling off the fireline and disengaging.

[(Exhibit 17) that the [] was not on the scene of the fire. Further, communication from the on-scene operations person and the [] was not adequate for the [] to understand the urgency of what was happening on the fire.

[(Exhibits 9 and 18) said that at approximately 1326 hours, [] and [] started a reconnaissance of the fire. [] observed that the crew west of H-1 had moved into the "black." The fire had picked up below H-1 and eventually burned over H-1. [] flew over H-2 and spoke with ALLEN, who told [] they would have the helispot completed in 15 or 20 minutes. [] thought to [] that [] would not insert a crew into H-2 that day. [] could not recall whether [] communicated to ALLEN about furnishing a crew. At about the time of the reconnaissance flight, the fire started to heat up and really got active below H-1. Realizing [] could not land at H-1 to get out to do anything, [] went back to the helibase. At that time [] called and said that [] was gathering the troops up, going to take a head count, and head down to the road. The fire was backing down toward Cache Bar, which is a boat ramp. The only indication of any fire heading toward H-2 was "those guys (rappellers) saying they had smoke in H-2." Although [] acknowledged that [] underestimated the amount of work and time to clear H-2, delaying the timely removal of ALLEN and HEATH, [] did not consider it a delay in formulating and executing a plan to retrieve them.

[]

[] Northfork/Middlefork Ranger District, SCNF, declined to be interviewed by OIG agents at the direction of [] attorney. [] was interviewed during the accident investigation by FS personnel. This section lists specific issues relating to [] followed by supporting evidence. As information, [] and []

(b)(6), (7)(c)

Workplace Environment

[] SCNF, provided a statement (Exhibit 24) to OIG in which [] said that the Cramer fatalities might have resulted indirectly from issues related to the SCNF management problems. [] essentially ran the fire program not only on [] Districts, but also to a large extent, throughout the Forest through [] influence over []. In spring 2003, [] and [] supposedly in an effort to relieve [] of additional stress, instituted a closed-door policy for [] office with themselves as doorkeepers. [] was particularly difficult for [] to deal with and had antagonized many fire personnel with [] refusal on a couple of occasions in 2002 to use helicopters to extract some firefighters following successful fire suppression. [] once questioned the competency of [] Middle Fork RD, to [] who replied, "That comment borders on gender harassment." [] had commented to [] in 2003 that [] "is a hard person to say no to."

On January 27, 2004, [] Middle Fork RD, Challis, ID, stated to the RA and former Special Agent-in-Charge (SAC) DAVID DICKSON that [] had

concerns about [redacted] management style. Sometime after the AIFR was released in December 2003 [redacted] called a meeting of District employees and said, "They're out to get me. I've been set up." [redacted] is dividing the staff, either pro or con. [redacted] is a very destructive manager.

On January 27, 2004, [redacted] Middle Fork RD, stated to the RA and SAC DICKSON that [redacted] is not on the "[redacted] team." [redacted] described this situation as [redacted] deciding if you are either with [redacted] or against [redacted] In [redacted] first meeting with [redacted] [redacted] decided [redacted] was not to be part of the team, and [redacted] has not given [redacted] ideas and viewpoints any validity since then.

[redacted] Challis RD, stated (Exhibit 14) that many of the fire problems on the Forest could be attributed to [redacted] [redacted] is a "bulldog" and doesn't listen to others. [redacted] is "bull headed." [redacted] feels that if [redacted] had not delayed Initial Attack on the Crystal fire, a two-person rappel team could have handled it. Early suppression would have saved about \$1.8 million in suppression costs and made resources used on the Crystal fire available for the Cramer fire. When [redacted] was in the helicopter with [redacted] above the Cramer fire, [redacted] felt [redacted] would avoid questioning the [redacted] decision on the location of H-2 since it was [redacted] you would be questioning. [redacted] could be very intimidating, especially if you worked for [redacted] and [redacted] controlled the Forest. [redacted] wanted only [redacted] guy (including [redacted] on the fire." [redacted] avoided using anyone from the Supervisor's Office or another District.

[redacted] SCNF provided a statement (Exhibit 25) to the AIT in which [redacted] said that [redacted] is an extremely arrogant person and believes [redacted] is always right. Nobody can really talk to [redacted] about anything. "So, it's [redacted] way and that's it. Right or wrong, [redacted] calling all the shots in those [redacted] Districts in all fire-related matters. It's not a matter of small, big, large fires [redacted] in control of the whole thing." [redacted] does not understand why a person in that position would not consult all the experience that is around to make decisions. [redacted] doesn't want you there...I was not invited." There were mistakes made on those [redacted] districts [redacted] but it was "swept away" and nothing could be done about it. [redacted] attributes the reason for this to the [redacted] and [redacted] relationship of [redacted] and [redacted] and what it contributed to the Fire Staff and [redacted] relationship.

[redacted] Challis RD, stated (Exhibit 20) that [redacted] and [redacted] staff made slow decisions regarding Initial Attack on both the Crystal and Little Soldier fires. When [redacted] raised concerns with [redacted] [redacted] ignored them. [redacted] does not allow fire experts to have input on fires in [redacted] District. [redacted] wants final and exclusive say on things, including fire operations, about which [redacted] has no expertise [redacted] is demanding and always wants control. [redacted] will not back down.

[redacted] stated (Exhibit 19) that it has been real clear to all (in the fire management organization of the SCNF) that the combination of [redacted] and [redacted] had not been good for the Forest. The Forest did not operate on the basis of policy; it operated on the basis of personality. Employees of the Forest did basically whatever [redacted] wanted. In [redacted] fire shop, they felt like "the Forest supervisor and the Forest FMO is [redacted] [redacted] is just sort of mouthing whatever [redacted] wants." [redacted] could not

understand how the FS allowed a [] team that had supervisory or complementary responsibilities to be in place.

[] Salmon/Cobalt RD, in an interview with the RA on February 12, 2004, stated that, regarding [] "you are either in [] fold or you're not. It's a love/hate relationship with []" [] can be very intimidating. In late spring 2003, [] attended a meeting with [] [] and others regarding wilderness use. Someone asked [] [] what [] thought of mountain bikes in the wilderness, and [] answered that [] thought they were okay. [] and [] stared at [] with angry looks. Later, [] told [] would not allow [] in the wilderness anymore because of [] attitude toward wilderness. "It's [] way or [] wrath."

Line Officer Duties

A review by the RA of the position description for FS District Ranger shows, in part:

The District Ranger serves as a key member of the Forest Management Team to formulate plans, policies, and objectives for the Forest. Supervises the District staff. Plans and directs the overall work of the unit performed through subordinate supervisors, team leaders, committee chairs, or comparable similar personnel. District Rangers are responsible for leading an organizational unit and implementing Forest Policies and are expected to be proficient in management competencies of External Relations, Communications, Environmental Awareness, Leadership, Interpersonal Relations, and Management Functions, as well as being knowledgeable in Natural Resource Management. Resolves conflict. Knowledge and ability to lead; think creatively; proactively adapt to changing environments; act decisively; and motivate, develop, inspire, affirm, and empower others. Knowledge of management functions to plan, organize, direct, implement, and evaluate processes to lead people and manage resources to achieve desired results.

[] stated (Exhibit 21) that the six District Rangers on the SCNF all have delegated authority to manage fires on their District up to and including Type II fires. The Incident Commander on a fire should be having discussions of strategy and tactics with the District Ranger.

[] SCNF, Salmon, ID stated (Exhibit 25) that in the afternoon of July 21, 2003 [] was listening to the radio traffic from the Cramer fire. It was very unorganized. They were "chasing. That's all they were doing." [] went into dispatch in the evening and spoke with [] and [] [] told them that the [] on the Cramer fire was "bad" and needed to come off of the fire, and that [] didn't hear any of the terms one is supposed to hear, "flank, anchor." [] told [] "You've got to get those guys off there." The next morning, [] went to Challis about 1100 hours and met with [] [], who asked [] "You don't like the [] up there (Cramer fire), you don't like [] for what?" [] told [] that [] did not hear any fire terminology, more of a chasing scene, not a formulated plan. [] told [] "I don't think [] competent." When [] told [] the

[] should be removed from the fire, [] "just kind of shrugged [] shoulders, well, whatever, okay." [] believed [] clearly understood what [] said.

[] stated (Exhibit 21) that on Monday night, July 21, 2003, [] was in the dispatch office. The [] approached [] and expressed concerns about the K-Max helicopter not being used on the Cramer fire. [] verified from the dispatch log that the helicopter was put into use shortly after [] took over as the [] at about 2:00 p.m. [] also told [] that things sounded disorganized on the fire. [] later told [] about [] concerns. [] told [] that [] had talked to [] and the concerns that [] told [] were not the same as those that [] had related to [] on July 21, 2003. According to [] [] had been listening to the contract crews, not [] , talking on the radio.

[] Salmon, ID provided a signed, sworn statement (Exhibit 26) to OIG in which [] said that sometime in the mid-afternoon or evening of Monday, July 21, 2003, [] was present in the Dispatch office with [] and [] [] was very concerned about [] management as [] of the Cramer fire. [] complained that [] had no plan and was disorganized. [] was planning as [] went along [] based part of [] concerns on the radio communications [] heard between [] and the helicopters and others on the fire line. [] showed [] frustration by slapping [] hand on the map in the dispatch office. [] appeared to be neutral to [] comments and seemed to just take in the information and gave no indication [] was going to do anything [] felt that [] as the SCNF [] had a responsibility to act on this information. However, [] does not know what action [] may or may not have taken.

[] (Exhibit 14) stated [] was at the CRYSTAL helibase on July 22, 2003, sometime before the fatalities on the Cramer fire. [] approached [] and told [] about a conversation [] had with [] regarding [] handling of the Cramer fire. [] felt [] was unprofessional and incompetent and should not be the [] on any fire. [] also mentioned a conversation [] had with [] earlier in the day (July 22, 2003) at the Middle Fork District office. In that conversation, [] said [] expressed [] concerns to [] about [] competency and the disorganized activity on the Cramer fire.

[] Salmon, ID, provided a statement (Exhibit 27) to the AIT in which [] said on July 21, 2003, while working as radio dispatcher [] helped coordinate resource needs for the Cramer fire. [] also overheard concerns expressed by [] about fire organization on the Cramer fire under [] during the afternoon of July 21, 2003. [] expressed those issues to [] in the dispatch office. Finally, [] had a conversation from [] who was on the Cramer fire. [] told [] felt the [] was not ordering enough resources for the fire, but [] was reluctant to approach [] on the subject. [] [] hinted that a conference call from [] to [] and other fire personnel

might be helpful. Later that evening, [] and [] had a conference call with [] to discuss resource needs and general tactics for July 22, 2003. [] did not believe [] directly expressed [] concerns about the Cramer fire to [].

[] stated (Exhibit 8) that [] had a conversation with the [] on July 22, 2003. Prior to walking into a briefing meeting at Middle Fork RD, [] had been advised that both [] and [] Bureau of Land Management, were expressing concerns about the Cramer fire [] specifically asked [] what those concerns were. [] mentioned not utilizing the helicopter's bucket support to the extent that they could and that the crews seemed like they were confused and not good at what they were doing. [] asked [] if there were concerns about [] and [] said no. "And so I walked into...the in-briefing" for the Crystal fire. The only knowledge [] had of the strategy and tactics for the Cramer fire on July 21 and 22, 2003, were "what I've read in the radio logs...I was never advised" about tactics and strategy, and had no direct knowledge of any changes in strategy, or if there were any changes.

(b)(5)

[] (Exhibit 14) said [] had a conversation with [] in the early afternoon of July 22, 2003, before the Cramer fatalities. In that conversation, [] told [] about a conversation [] had earlier in the day with [] and that [] expressed [] concerns to [] about [] competency.

[] said in [] July 27, 2003, statement (Exhibit 8) to the AIT that [] did not have any discussions about the Cramer fire on Tuesday, July 22, 2003. [] "left Salmon, ID, very early to get down to [] because we were in-briefing at 10:00." In [] August 4, 2003 statement (Exhibit 8), which was a required administrative interview by the AIT, [] provided two different accounts of when [] spoke to [] regarding []

[] concerns. On pages 40 thru 42, [] stated "I didn't see [] at work on Monday...When I got [] Monday night, I don't recall if we even talked about the fire at [] I think we had a beer...On Tuesday the first time I started talking to [] about the Cramer Fire was after I'd been notified of the fatalities." On page 48, [] said [] found out about [] concerns from [] "It would have been either that morning or the night before. I don't recall."

Agent's Note:

(b)(5)

(b)(4), (b)(2), (b)(5)

[(b)(6), (7)(C)]

A review by the RA of the position description for Supervisory General Engineer [(b)(6), (7)(C)] on the SCNF) shows, in part:

The Supervisory General Engineer provides leadership and direction in the Forest's health and safety program. During field travel and inspections, observes projects and workers for indication of unsafe working conditions and working habits, physical or other safety hazards, taking or recommending immediate corrective action as necessary. Advice concerning appropriate wildfire suppression strategies is especially important. Is a member of the Forest Supervisor's staff. Makes formal inspections and monitors Ranger Districts to determine adherence to regulations, standards, policies, condition and adequacy of equipment, organization and personnel. Professional knowledge of advanced concepts, principals and practices of Fire and Aviation Management; to serve as the technical authority for the full range of fire management activities and programs on the SCNF. Resolve minor conflicts that arise. Provide staff advice and administration for Engineering, Lands, Minerals, Timber, Fire, and Aviation Management.

Firefighter Safety

[] stated (Exhibit 21) that when [] reported for duty on the SCNF, [] told [] that [] marching orders were to be very active in fire. [] main job was interaction with the District Rangers. [] was a [] and did not have line authority. [] was responsible for keeping the [] informed of fire decisions. If [] were informed of a problem, [] would try to mitigate it or discuss it with a District Ranger. When [] wanted information about a fire, [] went to dispatch or to the [] On the evening of July 21, 2003 [] approached [] and expressed concerns about failure to use a helicopter promptly on the Cramer fire and that things sounded disorganized on the fire. [] told [] about [] concern. [] did not go to the Cramer fire and did not know what the strategies and tactics were for the fire. "I did not discuss strategy and tactics with the ranger, or with [] or with the helitack crew that was there that first night."

[] stated (Exhibit 24) that [] direct supervisor was [] [] professional relationship with [] had suffered because [] was [] and [] became increasingly at odds over firefighting strategy on [] District. [] would voice [] concerns to [] but since [] was [] made it clear by [] actions that [] would almost always follow [] lead.

[] stated (Exhibit 26) that [] was present on July 21, 2003, in the afternoon or evening hours during a conversation between [] and [] [] expressed concerns about [] management as [] of the Cramer fire. [] showed [] frustrations by slapping the map in the dispatch office. [] appeared to be neutral to [] comments and gave no indication [] was going to do anything. [] had a responsibility to act on this information. Later in the evening, at

(b)(6), (7)(C), (b)(2), (b)(7)(C)

[] stated (Exhibit 8) that in the past 2 years there has been an extensive amount of review on red card qualifications on the Forest, both in terms of course work and task books. The SCNF had a red card committee that was represented by one person from the district, a line officer representative, and a representative from the dispatch center. They went through everybody's red cards, made all the corrections, found the documentation, completed the course work, and put people back into a trainee status. Some red cards were signed by the district ranger, which included seasonals, qualifications at the firefighter level. [(b)(6), (7)(C)] signed the remainder.

A review by the RA of [] Evaluation Record for the period February 27, 1999, to October 31, 2001 (Exhibit 30), obtained from the FS, showed an incomplete record.

[] was not evaluated on all tasks on the specific assignment, or [] was not able to complete certain tasks and additional guidance was required.

A Salmon/Challis Fire Qualifications Worksheet, Record of Review, dated April 29, 2002 (Exhibit 31), obtained from the FS, documented that [] had "really weak experience. Suppression experience since 1997 includes 1 shift as Enop, 1 shift as FFT1, 1 shift as ICT5, and 1 fire assignment (21 shifts) as a CRWB(T). Red Flags are being thrown up on this one! Lots of classroom training, but no real life experience to speak of. I would question who [] equals. Has no task books in files." One of the reviewers was []

A review of Verification/Certification of Completed Task Book (Exhibit 32) dated July 12, 2002, reveals that the position is left blank. [] certified that [] had performed all tasks and signatures were complete. [] also verified that [] had performed as a trainee and should be considered for certification in this position (not specified which position).

[] signed as the certifying official, noting at the bottom []
[] Aware of []
qualifications/training when [] was a Region 1 employee."

An e-mail dated November 12, 2002 (Exhibit 33), obtained from the FS, notes that []

[] observed from red card files that [] was signed-off the previous season as a qualified crew boss. [] had not attended the required courses. [] questioned who approved that red card, and stated "As of right now, [] not qualified." S-260 has been in the qualifications arena for a long time and S-234 is fairly new, and [] had not completed either. "After 30-mile (fire), it's in our best interest to make sure that folks are truly qualified before the blessing is given." [] responded by stating that [] had signed it. [] made a "presumption" that since [] had a task book initiated in 1999 by Region 1, that they had checked [] course work. [] would try to obtain the training records from []

[] stated (Exhibit 25) that [] had called [] and tried to get [] name requested on the Blackwall fire as a strike team leader trainee. That was when [] signed [] task book as crew boss. Everyone on the Forest disagreed with []

[] stated (Exhibit 26) that in the summer of 2002, [] submitted a Crew Boss Position task book to the Forest for certification. A review of it indicated that none of the evaluators had signed off that [] had successfully completed all tasks. [] training records also did not include all required courses for the position of Crew Boss. [] was not satisfied and continued to press the issue. At a meeting in [] office on July 12, 2002, [] [] and [] discussed [] qualifications. They discussed [] records and expressed concerns with [] experience and lack of fully completed task book. [] had previous experience with [] and signed [] task book as certifying official based upon "awareness of [] qualifications/training when [] was a Region 1 employee."

[] stated (Exhibit 24) that [] disagreed with [] decision to sign off [] qualifications as crew boss. [] lacked support from some of the fire people on the south end of the Forest, in particular, [] Lost River RD. Because of [] concern, [] did not support the decision to sign [] off. What [] agreed to, in addition to the formalized training, was another assignment for [] as a crew boss, which [] accomplished during the shuttle recovery.

[] stated (Exhibit 21) that the Forest has a red card committee that starts at the district level. There was a red card representative from each ranger district, and, in conjunction with the line officer, go through their own red cards. Whoever got new training, whoever completed a task book, or whoever was doing on-the-job training had their records brought to [] who reviewed all of the records. They then had a red card committee meeting.

Agent's Note:

[(b)(5)]

A review by the RA of the position description for Forest Supervisor shows, in part:

The Forest Supervisor is responsible for the management, protection, and development of the Forest resources on the assigned National Forest. Hears and resolves minor complaints from employees. Forest Supervisors are responsible for leading an organizational unit and have considerable influence on FS policy and culture, are expected to be proficient in the management competencies of External Relations, Communications, Environmental Awareness, Leadership, Interpersonal Relations, and Management Functions, as well as being knowledgeable in Natural Resource Management. Builds coalitions to achieve objectives and resolve conflict. Resolves conflict. Knowledge and ability to lead, think creatively; proactively adapt to changing environments; act decisively, and motivate, develop, inspire, and empower others.

JACK TROYER, Regional Forester, Region 3, Ogden, UT, in a sworn statement (Exhibit 34) stated that [] was having difficulty bringing the SCNF team together. Starting about 12 months before the Cramer fire [] performance began to "decrease." He (TROYER) had concerns about [] effectiveness as a leader following []

return to work in spring 2003 after [] tension on the leadership team, and [] [] began to hear about [] kept [] informed that there was tension in the fire organization. [] also had concerns about the [] [] relationship and how it impacted the Forest Leadership Team. [] [] should have taken a leadership role and corrected the problem with [] [] and [] [] but [] did not.

[(b)(6), (7)(C)] RO, stated (Exhibit 28) that there had been some internal turmoil with the SCNF based on some of the different personalities, some of the strong personalities. There was also an issue because of the [] [] between the fire staff [] and the [] of the North Fork Ranger District [] [] It was an issue among some of the members of the fire organization.

[] [] stated (Exhibit 20) that [] [] did not follow through on issues raised regarding problems in the Forest's fire management structure. The fire staff on the SCNF in the Supervisor's Office (SO) was top heavy, while key positions on the Districts were not filled, such as the FMO on the North Fork RD. [] [] fought an internal battle with [] [] over fire resources. The issue was a question of staff overhead versus resources for fire. [] [] was indecisive and did not press the [] [] for more resources, despite the fact that other forests in the Region were in much better shape from a resource standpoint. Both [] [] and [] [] discussed resource concerns with [] [] but without [] [] help in pressing the RO, nothing was resolved. [] [] told [] [] on several occasions that [] [] was running the Forest. A general feeling on the Forest was that the SO had become the [] [] and [] [] Show" since the [] [] had influence over the [] []

[] [] stated (Exhibit 24) that [] [] believed the Cramer fatalities might have resulted indirectly from issues related to the SCNF management problems. [] [] essentially ran the fire program not only on [] [] Districts, but also to a large extent, throughout the Forest through [] [] influence over [] [] [] . In spring 2003, [] [] [] [] [] and [] [] supposedly in an effort to relieve [] [] of additional stress, instituted a closed-door policy for [] [] office with themselves as doorkeepers.

[] [] stated (Exhibit 19) that it was very clear that the combination of [] [] and [] [] has not been good for the Forest. The Forest did not operate on the basis of policy, but on the basis of personality. [] [] could not understand how the FS ever allowed a [] [] team that had supervisory or complementary responsibilities to be in place.

JACK TROYER, Regional Forester, R-4, Ogden, UT

Management Issues on the SCNF

[(b)(6), (7)(C)] RO, stated (Exhibit 28) that there had been some internal turmoil with the SCNF based on some of the different personalities, some of the strong personalities. There was also an issue because of the [] [] between the fire staff [] and the [] of the North Fork Ranger District [] [] It was an

issue among some of the members of the fire organization. [] communicated regularly with [(b)(6), (7)(C)] and with TROYER.

JACK TROYER stated (Exhibit 34) that [] was having difficulty bringing the SCNF team together. Starting about 12 months before the Cramer fire, [] performance began to "decrease." TROYER had concerns about [] leadership effectiveness following [] return to work in spring 2003 after [] He began to hear about tension on the leadership team, and [(b)(6), (7)(C)] kept him informed that there was tension in the fire organization. He also had concerns about the [] [] relationship and how it impacted the Forest Leadership Team. [] should have taken a leadership role and corrected the problem with [] and [] but [] did not.

[(b)(6), (7)(C)]

Standard Firefighting Orders #3, #6, and #7 (Exhibit 4) state that one must base all action on current and expected behavior of the fire; be alert, keep calm, think clearly, act decisively; and maintain prompt communications with your forces, your boss, and adjoining forces.

[] stated (Exhibit 9) that on the reconnaissance flight on the morning of July 22, 2003, [], [], and [] looked at the north and west side of the fire and discussed rappelling two firefighters in the top, right above the retardant line, to cut in a helispot. [] planned to use the helispot to insert a fire crew into that location. During the recon, [] was asking everyone's opinion. [] felt comfortable with the plan.

[] (Exhibit 19) [] (Exhibit 14), and [] (Exhibit 20); all experienced firefighters, said, in substance, that it was unsafe and not an accepted practice or strategy to insert rappellers above a fire. [] added that fire burns rapidly uphill. "You don't put people above the fires; you just don't do it, especially in the Salmon River breaks. It's just not done. Normally, a mid-slope fire in this fuel type will burn to the top of the ridge before anyone has an opportunity to do anything with it."

[] stated (Exhibits 17 and 22) that at approximately 0920 hours on July 22, 2003, [] SHANE HEATH and JEFF ALLEN departed to the fire. [] instructed the rappellers to clean up the helispot. It was already a one-way helispot minus one snag. [] and the pilot of the helicopter felt there were half a dozen trees they needed to clear out, and it would make an adequate helispot. There was not much vegetation on the ground at H2. It was a pretty nice hole there to begin with. Throughout the day, [] checked with the rappellers on at least three occasions about the status of the work, but [] never asked why it was taking so long. The rappellers did not call [] and say there was more work than they thought. They only said they needed a little bit more time, and it was always 30 or 45 minutes. At about 1400 hours (over 4½ hours after insertion), the [] spoke to [] about the possibility of not using H-2 that day. The [] was "wishy-washy on whether [] wanted to use it or not." [] requested from the Moyer crew that Helicopter 166 on their next flight to check out H-2 and see if it was "landable." If the helispot was completed, they were to pull the helitack rappellers from H2. [] did not know if they (H-166) went up there or not. At about 1445 hours, following lunch, []

(b)(6), (7)(C), (S)(2), (K)(2)

[(b)(6)]

asked if ALLEN and HEATH were back and learned they were still on H-2. At 1505, H-2 called for a pickup because it was getting smoky. [] felt the two rappellers were doing fire operations and belonged to the fire. [] was at the helibase doing the helicopter operations.

[(b)(6), (7)(C)]

Standard Firefighting Orders #7 and #8 (Exhibit 4) state that you must maintain prompt communications with your forces, your boss, and adjoining forces; and give clear instructions and be sure they are understood.

A review by the RA of the Cramer Forest Net log (Exhibit 35) prepared by the AIT from Forest Dispatch recording tapes showed that Helibase [] received a call from H-2 at 1505 hours requesting to be picked up. Helibase responded, "Alright, We'll send 193 on its way." H-2 answered, "Yeah, send them in a hurry." At 1509 hours H-2 asked, "Uh, [] what's the status of 193?" Helibase responded that it was still on the ground and would be spooling up shortly. H-2 said, "We need them right now." Helibase responded, "We copy, we're sending 166 to get you right now." At 1513, following another call from H-2, Helibase informed them that the helicopter needed some fuel, but "it's going to start spooling here right now. Any problems right at the moment?" H-2 responded, "Oh God, We just got fire down below us. So the smoke's coming right at us, so, uh, just make them hurry up." Helibase said, "We're spooling right now."

A review by the RA of the handwritten Helibase log (Exhibit 36) for July 22, 2003, showed that H-2 requested a pickup at 1505 hours. At 1510, helicopter 166 was airborne en route to H-2. At 1520, 166 was unable to land due to smoke and was leaving the area of H-2.

[] Helicopter Crew Member, Indianola Helitack Crew, provided a statement (Exhibit 37) to the AIT in which [] said that on July 22, 2003, [] was handling radio communications from the Helibase and on numerous occasions spoke with JEFF ALLEN at H-2. Sometimes, [] needed [] messages to go through air attack, which was Lead Plane 41, to make radio contact with H-2. [] was in communication with Lead plane 41 the whole time. In the afternoon of July 22, 2003, JEFF ALLEN called [] on the radio at 1505 hours and said he needed to be picked up at H-2. Helicopter 193 was getting a 30-hour inspection and Helicopter 166 had just landed. ALLEN called again at 1509 and 1513 hours and again requested immediate pickup. [] told them to standby. [] was getting the helicopter up.

[(b)(6), (7)(C)]

A review by the RA of the 2003 SCNF Fire Management Plan describes the responsibilities of the District/Zone Duty Officer, in part, as follows:

- Conduct risk assessment and complexity analysis on all District fires to determine incident management requirements.
- Ensure all incidents are managed in a safe and cost-effective manner. Monitor fire suppression operations for safety and management issues.
- Determine when a fire has escaped initial and extended attack suppression efforts.

(b)(6), (7)(C), (5)(2), (K)(2)

(b)(2)

- Conduct quality transitions in incident management.
- Monitor the daily conditions in relationship to fire severity and daily fire levels.
- Prepare Wildland Fire Situation Analysis on all types 1, 2, and 3 wildland fire incidents.
- Conduct inspections of District fires.
- Represent the District in setting priorities and allocating resources for fire emergencies.
- Monitor fire management operations to ensure the 10 Standard Orders and 18 Situations that shout watch out are followed.

[] SCNF, stated (Exhibit 9) that either late Sunday evening, July 20, 2003, or early Monday morning, July 21, 2003, [] notified [] that [] wanted [] or [] to be the [] in the Cramer fire. [] recommended to [] that [] be the [] and that [] be the [] for the north zone. [] was not aware if [] was notified, but [] subsequent actions on Monday and Tuesday indicated [] knowledge that [] had assumed that responsibility.

[] provided a statement (Exhibit 38) to the AIT and a signed-sworn statement (Exhibit 39) to OIG in which [] said, in substance, that [] was the fire [] for the North Zone of the SCNF when the Cramer fire was discovered on Sunday, July 20, 2003. [] arrived on the Cramer fire at approximately 2045 hours and verified that [] and [] were on the scene. The fire was transitioning to an extended attack and had to go to the next level. [] told [] that the fire needed to be handed over to [] and that [] was released from the fire. [] took over as the [] on July 21, 2003. During July 21 and 22, 2003 [] assisted [] with operational support, but did not get a chance to get back on site until after the fatalities. [] was not aware at any time after leaving the fire on July 20, 2003, what [] strategies and tactics were for fire suppression. [] flew the fire and came up with [] own strategies. After the fact, [] felt the fundamental error in the Cramer fire tactics was to put the rappellers at H-2 above the fire.

(b)(6), (7)(C)

Standard Firefighting Order #10 (Exhibit 4) states that you fight fire aggressively having provided for safety first.

[] stated (Exhibit 25) that, as the [] was aware that the Cramer fire had a K-Max helicopter on site at 0800 hours on July 21, 2003. [] became quite concerned when [] learned that the [] did not use the resource. It was a great opportunity to suppress the fire early. The helicopter did not go into service until after noon.

[] stated (Exhibit 27) that, as a [] made arrangements to get a type one helicopter for the Cramer fire to use on initial attack. The Forest already had several other fires burning, and they needed to stop this one before it got away from them. On July 21, 2003, the helicopter was set up for 0800 hours. However, it was not used on the Cramer fire until noon. Even if there were no people on the fire line, [] did not know why it was not launched.

[] stated (Exhibit 26) that if a competent crew had arrived promptly on the Cramer fire on the evening of Sunday, July 20, 2003, they would have had an impact on the fire. The

FERGUSON contract crew had gotten lost en route to the fire. Additionally, if the heavy helicopter that was available to the Cramer fire had been utilized fully on the morning of July 21, 2003, the helicopter might not have been required in the afternoon. It did not make sense to "save" the pilot flight hours for later in the day. A faster, more effective initial attack either Sunday night or early Monday, both of which were logistically possible for the Cramer fire, would have "caught" the fire or been a very good start toward containment.

[] stated (Exhibits 11 and 12) that [] was the [] on the Cramer fire on July 20 and 21, 2003. [] knew that [] was coming up to relieve [] as [] That order was put in on July 20, 2003, when [] flew a recon the first time, because [] knew the fire was going to be bigger. At about 0800 hours, July 21, 2003, dispatch notified [] that a large helicopter would probably be available shortly [] was told that [] would be arriving on the fire around 0900 or 1000 to transition with [] as the [] [] made the decision to keep the helicopter on the ground until [] took a recon over the fire and saw what [] had. [] did not want to get the helicopter up too early and burn all of its hours of flying time. [] wanted to give [] as much to work with as [] could. The helicopter launched about noon [] decision was thought out and based on the best information [] had at the time.

CONTRACT FIREFIGHTER CREWS

Performance of Contract Crews

[] stated the following (Exhibit 27): "Initially... (on July 20, 2003) we had to get a ... crew out there, and the type two (FERGUSON contract) crew was getting lost. I mean I had to repeat locations of where [] was twice to where the crew was supposed to report... The crew was off frequency, didn't know how to program it on the radio, the type two FERGUSON crew. It was kind of frustrating because, you know, I gave [] the specific frequencies, the command frequency and air to ground, before [] went... It didn't seem at all apparent that [] knew how to program the radio, which to me as a crew boss that should be a fundamental thing."

[] in an interview on October 29, 2003, with OIG Special Agent [] said that [] was the [] on the Cramer wildland fire. In that capacity [] directed the activity of three crews on the Cramer fire - an Oregon regular FS crew and two FERGUSON contract crews (18A and 18B). On July 22, 2003, [] observed several problems at H-1 (the helicopter base from which the fire was being fought) that caused [] to ultimately decide to pull the FS crew and the two FERGUSON crews at H-1 off the fire. [] did not pull the crews off the fire because of fire behavior. From [] observations, it was apparent that the FERGUSON crews were not following [] instructions. At one point [] had a discussion with an individual that [] believed might have been a squad boss for the second FERGUSON crew. [] told this person where to build line and where to go to tie up in the drainage where the other two crews were working. [] then met with the crew boss for the Oregon crew and [] saw that the FERGUSON crew was building line in the wrong direction. It was about this time that [] decided to abandon the mission.

[] in an interview on October 29, 2003, with OIG Special Agent [] said [] was at the Cramer fire on July 20 through 22, 2003. [] realized that the FERGUSON contract crews were not prepared for the firefighting work. [] believed that the FERGUSON crews should have been able to "catch" the Cramer fire, but they did not know what to do.

[] in an interview with OIG Special Agent [] on October 28, 2003, stated that [] was concerned about the Ferguson crew on the Cramer fire because of an apparent language barrier. One of the three Ferguson crews had only about three people on the crew that could speak English. The remainder of the crewmembers, totaling about 17 individuals, spoke only Spanish. The crew boss for this crew spoke only Spanish and required an interpreter.

[] stated (Exhibit 9) that there was a language barrier with one of the Ferguson crews. Most of the crew spoke Spanish; so when they were chatting (on the fire line), [] did not know if they were nervous or what they were saying.

* * * * *

LIST OF EXHIBITS

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(b)(6), (7)(c), (7)(d), (7)(e), (7)(f), (7)(g), (7)(h), (7)(i), (7)(j), (7)(k), (7)(l), (7)(m), (7)(n), (7)(o), (7)(p), (7)(q), (7)(r), (7)(s), (7)(t), (7)(u), (7)(v), (7)(w), (7)(x), (7)(y), (7)(z)

LIST OF EXHIBITS

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18	Statement of [(b)(6), (7)(c)] to the INQUIRY	9
19	Statement of [(b)(6), (7)(c)] to the AIT	9
20	Sworn Statement of [(b)(6), (7)(c)]	9
21	Statement of [(b)(6), (7)(c)] to the AIT	9
22	Statement of [(b)(6), (7)(c)] to the AIT	9
23	Statement of [(b)(6), (7)(c)] Salmon, ID to the AIT	10
24	Sworn Statement of [(b)(6), (7)(c)]	11
25	Statement of [(b)(6), (7)(c)] to the AIT	12
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27	Statement of [(b)(6), (7)(c)] Salmon, ID, to the AIT	14
28	Statement of [(b)(6), (7)(c)] Ogden, JT, to the AIT	17
29	Statement of [(b)(6), (7)(c)] Salmon, ID, to the AIT	17
30	Evaluation Record, [(b)(6), (7)(c)]	18
31	Salmon-Challis Fire Qualification Worksheet, Record of Review for [(b)(6), (7)(c)]	18
32	Final Evaluator's Verification for [(b)(6), (7)(c)]	18

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LIST OF EXHIBITS

<u>Exhibit Number</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Page Introduced</u>
33	E-mails between [(b)(4), (7)(C)] and [(b)(6), (7)(C)] regarding the Training Qualifications of [(b)(6), (7)(C)]	18
34	Sworn Statement, JACK TROYER, Regional Forester, Intermountain Region 4, Forest Service, dated February 4, 2004	19
35	Radio Log, Cramer Fire Radio Recordings, for July 22, 2003	22
36	Unit Log, Cove Creek Helibase, July 22, 2003	22
37	Statement of [(b)(6), (7)(C)] to the AIT	22
38	Statement of [(b)(6), (7)(C)] to the AIT	23
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(b)(6), (7)(C), (b)(2), (4)(C)