

Rapid Lesson Sharing

Event Type: Water Tender Rollover

Date: September 11, 2017

Location: Jolly Mountain Fire, Washington



The Water Tender's axels became separated from the vehicle and four sections of private fence were destroyed.

Big Truck Meets Narrow Road

On night shift, at approximately 1845, while driving to the fire line just a short distance outside of fire camp on a county road in a semi-rural area, a cooperater Water Tender drifted to the right-hand side of this narrow road that had a minimal shoulder.

According to witness statements, the Water Tender was traveling approximately 34 miles per hour.

The driver did not try to correct for fear that this action would cause the Water Tender to rollover. The driver believes that when both rear tires went off of the pavement, this action pulled the truck into the ditch.

The Water Tender driver said that he felt the rear tires move off of the pavement onto the gravel shoulder.

The driver did not try to correct for fear that this action would cause the Water Tender to rollover. The driver believes that when both rear tires went off of the pavement, this action pulled the truck

into the ditch—causing it to rollover and land on its side. The Water Tender was full of water.

During this rollover, the Water Tender's axels became separated from the vehicle and four sections of private fence were destroyed.



This Water Tender rollover Incident-Within-an-Incident provided us several important lessons. (See page 3.)

Public Members Call 911

Members of the public who were following the Water Tender were first on scene and called 911.

They acknowledged that the driver—who was wearing his seatbelt at the time of the accident—was alert, oriented, and had minor facial lacerations. (This Water Tender was mobilized through the state and did not go through the inspection process during check-in.)

County Dispatch Sends Emergency Response

County Dispatch sent an emergency response from the local town that consisted of law enforcement and ambulance

services. These county emergency services arrived within several minutes of the initial call.

Jolly Mountain Fire Personnel Arrive on Scene

At about 1900, incident personnel on the Jolly Mountain Fire hear radio traffic regarding a medical emergency being declared in Division Zulu. This incident was reported as “a single-vehicle rollover with injuries near Red Bridge Road.” By the time Jolly Mountain Fire incident personnel arrive on scene, county medical personnel are already providing medical aid to the driver.

As the operational tempo of the IWI began to escalate (as many high-stress situations do) the Operations Branch Director broke into the communication link and deescalated the situation to a pace that was appropriate to the response that was actually needed.

As more Jolly Mountain Fire personnel arrived on scene, the radio traffic began to increase. This was partly due to day resources returning to camp and night resources going out to the line. The Incident Management Team communications cleared the radio and had several scribes start to take notes.

IWI Operational Tempo Escalates

In a matter of minutes, there were a number of different Incident-Within-an-Incident (IWI), Incident Commanders identified. A 9-Line Medical Report had been started, but not completed.

As the operational tempo of the IWI began to escalate (as many high-stress situations do) the Operations Branch Director broke into the communication link and deescalated the situation to a pace that was appropriate to the response that was actually needed.

How do we incorporate our cooperators and contractors into our training scenarios to ensure success in the event of an unintended outcome?

LESSONS

- ❖ Communication links with our cooperators are critical. Fire incident management communicates to county emergency when incidents occur on the fire line and county assistance is needed. In this case, county emergency was notified first and did not relay the incident information to the fire. In the future, establishing a two-way communication link with all jurisdictional entities involved could help to reduce confusion.
- ❖ The 9-Line Medical and IWI protocol were moderately implemented. This is because the county was first on scene and had already initiated these through their dispatch. Does the 9-Line need to be initiated if EMS has already been activated?
- ❖ Controlling the operational tempo of anything—especially an IWI—is key to good decision making.
- ❖ Should all equipment, regardless of ownership, be inspected at check-in and demobilization?
- ❖ Controlling the communications room and having plenty of scribes (in this case 4-5) available to capture all of the pertinent information can be beneficial. During high-stress situations, it might be difficult for one individual to capture all of the information.
- ❖ Whether federal, state, county, or private contractors, we can never train too much when it comes to emergency situations. How do we incorporate our cooperators and contractors into our training scenarios to ensure success in the event of an unintended outcome?

Check Out More Water Tender Incidents:

[Big Windy Tender Fatality](#)

[First Creek Water Tender Rollover](#)

[Wildfire Lesson Learned Center search for Tender Rollover](#)



This RLS was submitted by:
PNW RLS Team
with support from the Pacific
Northwest Coordination Group

Do you have a Rapid Lesson to share?
Click this button:

[Share](#)
[Your Lessons](#)