

Selection Table for DOI / USFS Serious Accident Investigation Type

This table outlines how we select the type of investigation that will be used for serious accidents (fire and non-fire) involving the DOI and the USFS. In order to meet the original intent of 1995 Interagency MOU, when either the DOI Serious Accident Investigation (SAI) or the USFS Coordinated Response Protocol (CRP) are used, the other agency will provide a representative to the SAI or CRP team.

Agency Affiliation of Victim(s)	Agency with Operational Control	Agency Jurisdiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigation Type • Team Lead • Deputy or Representative
DOI	DOI	DOI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOI SAI • DOI Team Lead • USFS Interagency Rep
USFS	USFS	USFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USFS CRP • USFS Team Lead • DOI Interagency Rep
DOI	USFS	USFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOI SAI • DOI Team Lead • USFS Deputy
DOI	DOI	USFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOI SAI • DOI Team Lead • USFS Interagency Rep
USFS	DOI	DOI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USFS CRP + DOI MER** • USFS Team Lead • DOI Deputy
USFS	USFS	DOI*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USFS CRP • USFS Team Lead • DOI Interagency Rep
Both DOI and USFS	DOI or USFS	DOI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOI SAI • DOI Team Lead • USFS Deputy
Both DOI and USFS	DOI or USFS	USFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USFS CRP + DOI MER** • USFS Team Lead • DOI Deputy
DOI or USFS	Non-federal	Non-federal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOI SAI or USFS CRP based on agency of victim. • DOI lead if SAI, USFS lead if CRP. • Non-fed agency rep
Non-federal	DOI or USFS	DOI or USFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOI SAI or USFS CRP based on agency jurisdiction. • DOI lead if SAI, USFS lead if CRP. • Non-fed agency rep

Agency Affiliation of Victim(s)	Agency with Operational Control	Agency Jurisdiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigation Type • Team Lead • Deputy or Representative
Non-federal	Non-federal	DOI or USFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOI SAI or USFS CRP based on agency jurisdiction (see note 1) • DOI lead for SAI, or USFS lead for CRP • Non-fed agency rep or Deputy
DOI or USFS	DOI or USFS	Non-federal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOI SAI or USFS CRP based on agency of victim. • DOI or USFS lead from same agency of victim. • Non-fed agency rep and DOI or USFS Rep from different agency than lead.

*This will require DOI approval to go outside of Departmental Manual 485 with no DOI SAI response on DOI jurisdiction lands.

**DOI MER will require an expanded investigation team to ensure SAI-MER components are captured and completed.

Definitions:

Agency Jurisdiction – land ownership

Management Evaluation Report (MER) -- The internal report from the DOI SAI process that identifies causes, recommendation, and other SAI Team conclusions and observations and from which a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) is developed

Operational Control – the lead agency who has on-site operational supervision and control

Serious Accident -- An unplanned event or series of events that resulted in death, injury, occupational illness, or damage to or loss of equipment or property that result in:

- One or more fatalities;
- Three or more personnel who are inpatient hospitalized;
- Property or equipment damage of \$250,000 or more (for DOI only); and/or
- Consequences that the Designated Agency Safety and Health Official (DASHO) judges to warrant Serious Accident Investigation.

Note 1: Non-federal agencies may have agency specific processes that may require coordination for investigation process interface/integration with respective DOI or USFS delegating officials.

Note 2: If necessary and appropriate, joint Accident Review Boards (ARB) may be convened to review and approve accident reports.

Note 3: Any situation that may occur that is not covered in the selection table above will be resolved jointly by the DOI bureau DASHO and the USFS DASHO prior to issuance of the Delegation of Authority letter.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between the
United States Department of the Interior
and the
United States Department of Agriculture

I. Purpose. This Memorandum of Understanding establishes the basis for interagency investigation of serious fire-related accidents.

II. Introduction. If the causal factors of a serious fire-related accident are identified, effective corrective actions to prevent a recurrence can be taken. Interagency investigations add perspective and enhance the mix of skills and knowledge on the investigation team. Interagency investigations are especially important where there are common management and corrective action issues.

III. Policy. Interagency investigations will be conducted whenever a serious fire-related accident occurs on a USDA Forest Service managed fire, Department of the Interior managed fire, or a jointly managed fire. Aircraft accidents occurring during wildland fire operations will be investigated by the National Transportation Safety Board, the USDA Forest Service, and the Department of the Interior in accordance with established laws and agreements.

IV. Definitions.

A. *Serious Fire-Related Accidents.* Accidents occurring to personnel participating in wildland fire suppression or prescribed burning operations, or to personnel working in direct support of those activities, which result in one or more fatalities or the hospitalization of three or more personnel.

B. *Co-Lead Investigations.* Team leaders from both Departments and team members from both Departments.

C. *Agency-Lead Investigations.* Single team leader and team members from both Departments.

V. ~~Procedures.~~ Interagency investigation teams will include ~~representatives from~~ both the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture. Representatives of the Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration will

be invited to participate in these investigations, or will be given full support to conduct their own investigation.

A. *Co-Lead Investigations* will be conducted whenever:

1. A serious fire-related accident occurs on a USDA Forest Service/Department of the Interior jointly managed fire, or,
2. A serious fire-related accident involving USDA Forest Service personnel occurs on a Department of the Interior managed fire, or,
3. A serious fire-related accident involving Department of the Interior personnel occurs on a USDA Forest Service managed fire.

B. *Agency-Lead Investigations* will be conducted whenever only one agency is responsible for managing a fire, and a serious fire-related accident occurs affecting only personnel of that same agency. The agency responsible for managing the fire will lead the investigation.

VI. *Timeframes.* The report should be completed and a copy submitted to the appropriate Departmental Designated Safety and Health Official(s) within 45 calendar days of the accident.

VII. *Training and Qualifications.* Team leaders, investigators, and specialists will meet minimum training and qualification standards as jointly established by the Department of Agriculture, the Department of the Interior, and the National Wildfire Coordinating Group.

Wardell C. Townsend, Jr.
Assistant Secretary Operations
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Claudia P. Schecter
Director of Operations
U.S. Department of the Interior

SAI or CRP Joint Delegation of Authority Example

To: Serious Accident Investigation (SAI) Team Lead *or*
Coordinated Response Protocol (CRP) Team Lead

From: Delegating Officials,
US Department of Agriculture, Forest Service
US Department of the Interior Bureau, (specify agency)

Re: Joint Delegation of Authority for Serious Accident Investigation
Joint Delegation of Authority for Coordinated Response Protocol

Date:

This delegation of authority formalizes your appointments as Team Leader and Deputy Team Leader to conduct a serious accident investigation of the (specify incident and location).

This investigation will be conducted cooperatively between the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service and the United States Department of Interior (DOI) (fill in specific agency).

You are responsible for conducting the accident investigation by utilizing the following process (choose which applies per Investigation Selection Matrix):

- DOI *Interagency Serious Accident Investigation (SAI) Guide* – this guide provides your serious accident investigation team (SAIT) with a standardized and comprehensive process for conducting this SAI. It provides detailed information on the investigative process, gathering and maintaining custody of physical and photographic evidence, interviewing witnesses, documenting witness statements, developing and issuing investigation reports, and other critical subjects.
- USFS *Coordinated Response Protocol (CRP) and Learning Review (LR) Guide* – this guide provides your response team with comprehensive phased process for conducting the LR. It provides detailed information on the Learning Review process, including guidance for each review phase, information on gathering and maintaining data, interviewing witnesses, analysis and sensemaking, developing and issuing LR reports, guidance for the conduct of the Learning Review Board (LRB), and other critical subjects.
- CRP with SAI Management Evaluation Report (MER) supplement – this process will utilize the CRP process to create one public released report while providing the mechanism for the DOI agency (fill in specific agency) to meet agency and DOI policy requirements as outlined in the *SAI Guide*, specific to the MER. This will require the

investigation team to be larger in size and scope and incorporate elements of the accident review to meet the MER (e.g., fact finding, causal factor identification, etc.).

Please remember that any investigation is confidential until the final respective report(s) are accepted by the respective agency director(s) or administrators. As Team Leader, it is imperative that you emphasize this with your team and take appropriate measures to control the release of information related to the investigation.

Post investigation supplements and/or addendums may be necessary to meet agency specific protocols and/or review board processes.

As per the outlined accident investigation process, please provide your final report within (fill in) calendar days of the accident. Please expect to provide several post-accident investigation briefings as requested by the delegating official(s).

The official office of record for the final case file will be (fill in office).

Please use the following charge code(s) for all costs related to your investigation (fill in).

Your primary contact(s) from the respective agency office are (name, title, phone number). Please contact him/her for any assistance.

Thank you for accepting this important assignment.

Delegating Official, USDA Forest Service (fill in name)

Name

Title

Delegating Official, US Department of the Interior Bureau (specify agency)

Name

Title