



TO :

FROM : National Wildfire Coordinating Group

REPLY TO : NWCG@nifc.gov

DATE : 08/18/2006

SUBJECT : SAFETY BULLETIN : Expanded (72 Hour) Report, Balanced Rock Rollover



Twin Falls District Offic2.doc



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Twin Falls District Office
2536 Kimberly Road
Twin Falls, Idaho 83301



In Reply Refer To:
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August 17, 2006

To: Bud C. Cribley, Acting State Director

From: Bruce Shaffer, Safety Team Leader

Subject: Expanded (72 Hour) Report, Balanced Rock Rollover (BLM Engine Accident in Southern Idaho)

Location: Balanced Rock/Crows Nest Road, Owyhee, County, Idaho

Date of Occurrence: Monday August 14, 2006

Time of Occurrence: 6:29PM MDT

Activity: A BLM Heavy Fire Engine (Type 4) with a crew of three was returning to the Juniper Butte guard station from City of Twin Falls, ID when the driver lost control of the vehicle, resulting in a roll-over accident.

Number of Injuries: One crew passenger, in the front seat was transported by air evacuation to a hospital in Boise, ID with non-life threatening injuries to back and pelvis. The driver and third crew member were transported by ground ambulance to a local hospital in near by Twin Falls, ID treated and released.

Property Damage: Due to the extensive damage resulting from the roll-over at this time the heavy engine is assumed to be a total loss.

Preliminary Factual Findings: E2421 was returning from Twin Falls to the Juniper Butte Guard Station, west bound on Balanced Rock Road traveling approximately 35-40 mph. Approximately 11 miles west of Castleford the engine came over a rise and the road slightly turned to the right. Crew members reported that the vehicle's rear end started to slide to the outside of the road. The operator then attempted to correct the "fish tail" by slightly pulling the steering wheel to the right. The operator then over corrected the vehicle causing the engine to head to the right side of the road. The operator again attempted to regain control of the engine, over corrected and temporarily left the road bed. In an attempt to avoid impacting rocks along the left side of the road, the operator then applied the brakes, and steered right back onto the road. After impacting one large rock with the driver side rear tire, the engine began to lean to the

driver side and then made a three-quarter roll. The engine then came to rest on the passenger side lying perpendicular in the road.

Primary Factor: The primary cause of the accident was that the vehicle was traveling too fast for the road conditions. The road is a gravel road characterized by moderate slopes (approximately 5%), with large rocks, two or three feet in diameter, intermittently flanking portions of the road. In the area of the accident there are: areas of ruts, loose gravel, and wash board conditions. Due to the “blind” nature of the rise and turn of the road, it would have been advisable for the engine to travel at a slower rate of speed.

Secondary Factor: Lack of heavy engine operator experience and qualifications of the operator was a contributing factor.

Safety Considerations: Based on Law Enforcement reports, Safety Team interviews and crew member statements, two of the three firefighters were not wearing their seatbelts at the time of the accident.

//s// (Bruce Shaffer, Safety Team Leader)

cc:

Twin Falls District Manager
Twin Falls Associate District Manager
Twin Falls Fire Management Officer
Fire Information Officer
Twin Falls District Safety Officer
Shoshone Field Manager
ID BLM FMO
ID BLM Safety Manager
Office of Fire and Aviation Safety Manager
Official Case File