



(PNF)

LESSONS LEARNED



(SHF)

Same Day Fireline Dozer Roll-Overs

When: July 1, 2008
Location: Iron Complex (SHF) & Canyon Fire (PNF)

Dozer #1: Fireline Construction

Details: A contract Komatsu D83E dozer was involved in a roll-over while constructing a contingency fireline on an approximately 20% slope at approximately 1400 hours. The operator knocked a tree over and got high centered on the root ball, could not get free and began to fall down the slope. The dozer rolled an estimated 80 feet down the slope becoming airborne and colliding with 2 trees in an area of 50% slope. Injuries suffered by the operator included a broken shoulder and broken ribs. The operator was on his 9th day on the fire and had been working an average of roughly 14 hours per day.

Lesson(s) Learned:

- Be aware that the root balls of falling trees may cause a dozer to high center.
- Pushing trees over slower may reduce the risk of being knocked off balance or entrapped by a rising root ball.

Dozer #2: Fireline Construction

Details: At approximately 1500 hours a D-7 contract dozer was constructing fire line on a side slope of 50 to 55%. The dozer operator was backing up and was looking forward at his Dozer Boss ahead of him who had disappeared in the thick vegetation. While backing up he went too far off the edge and rolled several times. The operator suffered broken ribs, shoulder and had his ear severed and re-attached. The operator was a 30+ year operator on his 8th day on the fire who worked 14 or less hours per day.

Lesson(s) Learned:

- Loss of situational awareness by watching the dozer boss instead of his line of travel.
- Solid platforms must be constructed before advancing on steep terrain.
- Allow enough time to follow step by step procedures for soil compaction.

Commonalities:

- Both contract dozers were building contingency fire lines No direct threat
- Both accidents occurred soon after lunch (1400 - 1500)
- Both on about 8th to 9th day on the fire
- Both had been working less then the full 16 hour shifts
- ***Both were wearing their seatbelts Both are alive !!!***