

June 18, 1999

To: Agency Administrators, Donnelly Flats Fire

IS  
From: Joe Stam, Incident Commander B222

Subject: Your memo of 6/16/99

Thanks for the note outlining your concerns. Even though we have discussed them, I thought it important to answer them in writing. I will address your concerns in the same order as your memo.

1. As for the perceived issue of Delta Area Forestry charging against the fire. This is extremely difficult to track. There are state, federal, and local government agencies charging to this incident number from Delta to probably most of the lower 48 states. This is an agency administrator responsibility and must be resolved between the BLM military FMO and the Division of Forestry regional forester. I have visited Delta Area Office and voiced concern that they were charging inappropriately against the incident charge code. Al Edgren assured me that they were not and invited us to look at their records at any time. Since that time I have heard via Rod Christianson that he has reviewed Delta's records and to date has seen no inappropriate charges to this incident. Rod assured me that the state would continue to monitor the situation to ensure that there would not be any problems.

I feel that the structure engine task force issue has been resolved. Dave Jandt and I discussed this issue twice on 6/13/99. Dave initially called me at 2145 hrs expressing his concern that the engines had been ordered by Delta without proper coordination with the type 2 IMT. I agreed to check into it and find out how they had been ordered and if they were needed for the protection of Delta Junction from the fire. I talked to several state personnel from the Northern Region and was convinced that the task forces were indeed needed. I called Dave back at 2215 hours and informed him that the engines were necessary and should be ordered for the Donnelly Flats Fire. Dave agreed and he went back to directing the suppression efforts on the incident. I assumed the type 2 IMT had switched the order over to the incident's ordering process. This did not occur and as it turned out, took several days for the type 1 IMT to get accomplished. I have been assured by several knowledgeable people in both agencies that this is not a big issue and is resolved at this time. The type 1 IMT and Delta Area agreed that the logistical support for the structure group would be handled by the area office.

2. The caterer order went in on 6/14/99 and was never canceled. John LeClair, Margo Hornback and several other BLM/AFS personnel were involved in this order and their efforts resulted in a very good deal for the incident and the agency. I had told John that I thought we should be involved in the decision to go or cancel the caterer thinking that we would need to replace the order. He made the proper decision and went forward in doing his job. The contract may in fact, already have been signed when we had our discussion on 6/15/99. I know I said I was going to send Tammy a general message to inform her of our decision prior to going ahead. I was not aware that the contract had been signed until you informed me on 6/16/99. I apologize for the way this was handled and understand your concern. I was not as informed on the caterer

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contract as I thought I was and gave you bad information based on my limited knowledge of the order. I thought that I had a better handle on things but as the facts show, I did not. I will attempt to not let this scenario repeat itself.

3. We did not order Rodney Christianson.

attachment - 6/16/99 memo

cc: Dave Jandt

6/16/99

Joe,

There are a few issues about which we are becoming concerned. We'd like to get them on paper and discuss them with you when we have time.

1. My biggest concern is that the team still hasn't gotten it's arms around the problem we are having with DAF ordering against the fire without zone or fire oversight. My extended dispatch called me this morning and said they had just received a fax of an order for two engines and one crew dated the 15<sup>th</sup>. It's not clear to us if this was in fact ordered against B-222, but this confusion is an illustration of the type of situation we want to avoid. This problem was identified as one of the highest priorities for the team, and we're still not confident it is being addressed. As of this afternoon, our extended dispatch still has no record of the manpower or equipment being used in the structure protection group, and we need this problem to be rectified. At some point we will have to assume they are not part of the fire's logistical and financial system.
2. Yesterday we talked about the caterer, and you assured us we would discuss the issue again before an order was cut for one. This morning we found out the resource order had been made yesterday morning, and the caterer is flying in this afternoon. As with concern number one, I don't feel the team is making the effort to keep us informed. We would like to revisit the catering issue not so much for the decision that was made, but for the process used to make it.
3. Today Dave Hendren put a note on my desk informing me that Rodney Christianson has been ordered for the fire as the State Comptroller. Again, an issue that I feel should have involved us and didn't. We would like to discuss why the fire needs a State comptroller, and the process involved in the ordering. I have asked Veronica Belton to tag along with Rodney and report back to me.

Looking forward to talking with you.

Tammy and John