

## Observations and suggestions pertaining to the Fall Fire Season Events

The willingness of all of the TDF personnel to pitch in and help was very noticeable and made a huge difference in the successes of the Division during this fire siege.

### Emergency Activations

Don't wait too long- There seemed to be a hesitancy to call for assistance, It's OK to ask for help. (Local and National resources)

TDF resources worked to many hours and to many days without R&R, order additional resources before firefighter Fatigue becomes an issue. Enforce work rest policies; just don't say "Be safe Out there"

- The movement of resources from West to East was well executed. The sending districts put together equipment and manifests easily and planned for replacing these resources. The requesting districts need to plan out the support of incoming units a bit sooner. Have this information developed so when the request is made, the location and assignment is clear and communicated. A local liaison should be assigned immediately. The liaison needs to have purchasing authority. This was done after a bit of scrambling. An emergency mobilization plan might be helpful.

Resource Utilization; don't resist the help you request- There is a resistance to recognize the competency of outside resources, an attitude or belief that "Only we know how to fight fire here" seems to exist. Especially for the FL IMT when it was first brought in. Local management wanted the IMT to manage the fire but without allowing TDF resources to be managed by the team.

(Perhaps Utilize the Florida IMT close out report for suggestions to help with IMT/Agency operations.)

The Division should make modern Incident management a priority. Preparedness should be something the State agency takes the lead in. Training should be a priority, if as much energy was put into learning how to work in EI-suite instead of using a hacked in boot-legged system the possibilities are endless.

Development of Standing IMT's that are available is essential. (Emergency pay should make this easier to accomplish)

Develop-update-review interagency and with-in agency operating plans: ie. Mutual Aid plans, MOU's, Interagency Emergency Agreements. Review plans with cooperators annually.

Work with-encourage Law enforcement-TEMA- State Fire Marshal to develop evacuation protocols.

(Do you think the loss of life would have been reduced if evacuations plans were in place and evacuations were ordered when Park declared a monster was heading to Gatlinburg?) Florida and California have good programs to study.)

The missions of the IMT's were not clear, at least in my mind. Then IMT (CD) did not have a dedicated OPS Chief and the team's mission evolved primarily into logistical and planning support. The AC was too involved with the IMT management. The AC was trying to complete tasks and manage the incidents instead of allowing the Local IMT to function. Let the IMT's develop their own Plan and work to support these plans. The AC should be for support, setting state priorities, assisting with Aircraft ordering, managing State Issues and working with TEMA and cooperating agencies. The AC could be a central ordering point, but let the orders come from the bottom up, not the top down.

(There were instances Nashville made logistical or personnel orders and the IMT had no knowledge of this)

Keep up the 209's; especially critical resource needs and structure threat; that is a SIT function, in hindsight that should have been added to the information Leon and I collected for the morning and evening report. If dispatch offices are too busy; assign a SIT type person to 209 duties that reports to the Fire Chief.

Develop and train a group of relief dispatchers. (I know the CD and believe the ETD dispatchers were worn to a frazzle, (the new automated dispatch system may make that easier)

Develop a common Firewise message discussing the good and bad of the loss of homes relating to the Firewise hazard mitigation program. (Especially for Cobbly Knob, how many homes that were lost were up to date with hazard mitigations or to what degree were mitigations completed?) Have a TDF Firewise visit to Cobbly Knob to assess the damage/fire area when the community allows.