Details on Air Resource Orders,

August 26-27, 2009, Station Fire

- Air resources ordered and utilized on the Station fire on August 26th included 2 Air tankers, 2 Helitankers, 5 medium Helicopters, 1 Lead Plane and 2 Fixed Wing Air Attack. The Aircraft was provided through Forest Service contracts, Los Angeles County and Los Angeles City.

- Air resources ordered and utilized on the Station Fire throughout the day on August 27 included 6 Air tankers, 5 Helitankers and 2 medium Helicopters along with 2 Lead Planes and 3 Fixed Wing Air Attack. The Aircraft was provided through Forest Service contracts, Los Angeles County and Los Angeles City.

- At 5:43 pm Incident Commander Spyrison placed an Aircraft order for the following day, August 27, 2009. The order was based on the current fire conditions and what was anticipated as needs for the next day. The fire was 15 acres, the fire line was being constructed by ground crews and control objectives were being met. Mop-up and line construction progressed slowly, but well. Spyrison requested two medium water dropping helicopters for August 27. ROSS Requests A-13 and A-14 placed to Southern California Geographic Area Coordination Center. [ROSS request A-13] was to be filled by Helicopter 523 from the Sequoia National Forest. Helicopter 520 from the Sierra National Forest was planned to be assigned to [ROSS request A-14] by the Southern California Geographic Area Coordination Center. At this time, he expected to be able to utilize Los Angeles County Helicopter 14 with its night water dropping capability for several hours after dark to support hose lay and mop up work of the ground crews. Los Angeles County ordered release of Helicopter 14 at 6:01pm for Emergency Medical Service availability.

- Due to standard protocols for flight time limitations and rest requirements, Incident Commander Spyrison understood that if pilots were not available, aircraft may not arrive on scene at 7am or first light on August 27. He knew that usually, because of pilot shifts, time needed for briefings, safety checks and loading of fuel and retardant/water, air resources are not ready to actually fly in the mornings until around 8am. If the requested aircraft had not been mobilizing by 8am for the Station Fire the IC would indeed have expressed a strong sense of urgency and elevated the need for air resources.

- Incident Commander Spyrison’s original order for August 27 was placed at 5:43 pm on the 26th and he added additional resources to that order at 12:50am on the 27. At 12:50 am spot fires were occurring below the Angeles Crest Highway. Three to four spot fires had been successfully suppressed by engines and ground crews. One spot fire, estimated at 2-5 acres, 200-300 feet below the highway was inaccessible with unburned fuels between the spot fire and the highway. Access to the spot fire was difficult to impossible. Line personnel could not find safe access points to begin downhill line construction and mitigate safety protocols and downhill line construction guidelines (reference 10 and 18...
Fire Orders). Mop-up continued on the portion of fire above the highway with good progress being made. Because of the spot fires below HWY 2, Station IC (Spyrison) placed an order for additional Aircraft to be over the fire by 0700. He requests 1- Type 1 Helitanker [ROSS request A-15], 3- Air Tankers (any type) [ROSS request A-16, A-17, A-18], 1 Air Attack [ROSS request A-19] and 1 Lead Plane [A-20].

- At 1:38 am a spot fire below the highway still remained at 2-5 acres, and the fire above the road was still around 15 acres, it had not increased in size through the night.
- At 2:29 am, due to the fire behavior at this time, crews were unable to make access to the spot fire without compromising the 10 Standard Fire Orders, 18 Situations that Shout Watch Out and the Downhill Line Construction Checklist.
- At 4:43 am Southern California Geographic Area Coordination Center advised ANF ECC that [ROSS request A-14] will not be filled with Helicopter 520 from the Sierra National Forest due to a divert of the aircraft to an immediate need request by Yosemite National Park due to spot fires. Southern California Geographic Area Coordination Center advises they will attempt to fill the order elsewhere.
- At 4:45 am all attempts to engage the spot fire below the highway were unsuccessful, with no access points being found to provide safe anchor points for firefighters. Station Fire Incident Commander Spyrison decides helicopter support at first light is the best solution to try and keep the fire from spreading and to provide some chance for firefighters to safely access the spot fire below the highway.
- Station Fire Incident Commander (Spyrison) suggests attempting to fill [ROSS request A-14] with a Los Angeles County Helicopter, if aircraft and pilots were available they could be over the fire at first light.
- At 4:46 am ANF ECC contacted Los Angeles Command and Control Dispatch Center via telephone, of availability of a helicopter for day shift to fill [ROSS request A-14].
- At 4:47 am Los Angeles County Command and Control Dispatch advised ANF ECC, via telephone, unable to fill [ROSS request A-14]. Per Los Angeles County Command and Control Dispatch Chief (Unknown) unable to fill due to pilot shortage. ANF ECC advises Station IC (Spyrison). Los Angeles County unable to fill [ROSS request A-14].
- At 4:50 am Station IC (Spyrison) advises ANF ECC to check with Los Angeles City Fire Department on the availability of a helicopter to fill [ROSS request A-14]
- At 5:03 am Los Angeles City Fire Department Battalion Chief (Sullivan) advised ANF ECC, via telephone, Helicopter Fire2 can fill [ROSS request A-14] if nothing comes up between now and the time you need them.
- At 5:54 am, 50 minutes after Los Angeles City said they could fill the order, Los Angeles City Fire Department Battalion Chief (Sullivan) advised ANF ECC they not able to fill [ROSS request A-14], reason unknown.
- At 7:01 am all aircraft and aircrews assigned to the FOX Air Tanker Base are on duty as of 7:00 am performing aircraft preflight checks, refueling, loading retardant and attending morning fire situation and safety briefings. Morris IC [Woychak] advised ANF ECC aircraft desk, the Morris Fire will fill [ROSS request A-14] with Helicopter 554 for water dropping only, will fill [ROSS request A-15] with Helitanker 792, LeadPlane [ROSS request A-20] and 3 Air Tankers to fill [ROSS requests A-35, A-36, A-3]. Morris IC
(Woychak) requests ANF ECC to create an order to fill behind Helicopter 554 for the Morris Fire.

- The first aircraft (Fixed Wing Air Attack) arrived over the Station fire at 6:44 am. Hilitanker 792 departed for the Station Fire at 7:35 am with an estimated time of arrival of 7:45 am. The 4 Air tankers ordered began departing FOX at 8:42 am with an estimated flight time of 10 minutes to the fire. The other air resources ordered for that day continued to arrive throughout the morning with 2 additional Air tankers ordered [ROSS requests A-40 and A-41] and received in the afternoon.