Date: March 8, 2010

**Topic:** Airtankers at 1000 hrs 27 Aug 2009 on the Station Fire, CA

**Issue:** Confusion exists about airtanker orders for the Station Fire. The confusion probably arises from individuals who are trying to understand our Resource Ordering and Status System (ROSS) documentation system without understanding the working of the ROSS itself.

**Key Points:**

- No “airtankers” were cancelled!

- ROSS orders A-35, A-36, A-37, and A-38 were all large airtanker orders being filled by the new "day shift" aircraft dispatcher in response to requests from the new Incident Commander (IC), day shift, and the new air attack. Orders A-16, A-17, and A-18 were entered into the system at 0050 in response to the original request from Will Spyrsion. You see where both the regular night aircraft dispatcher and the expanded dispatchers (already in place for the Morris Fire) had noted the A-16, A-17, A-18 orders.

- After mandatory rest and briefings, the aircraft were available the morning of 27 August. The new "day shift" dispatcher entered new orders (A-35, A-36, and A-37) to move these aircraft as quickly as possible to the fire. She obviously missed the earlier notations of these aircraft in ROSS as A-16, A-17, and A-18. Folks look at ROSS printouts and see that for that particular entry into the ROSS system these aircraft (A-35, A-36, A-37) were noted by the dispatcher as "needed" at 1000 hrs PST. This is why some folks are asking about the "aircraft needed at 1000 hrs".

- Large airtankers were dispatched with alacrity. ROSS order A-35 (Air Tanker 55) was first off Fox Field at 0842 hrs, A-36 (Air Tanker 11) was off Fox Field (WJF) at 0851 hrs, and A-37 (Air Tanker 45) was off WJF at 0903 hrs.

- Sequentially, I'm sure you'll note that Air Tanker 43 (filled from A-38) was actually the third airtanker to roll in the sequence of large airtankers lifting from WJF that morning with "wheels up" at 0856 hrs. A-38 was in the air quickly filling the fourth airtanker order which by had been ordered at 0821 hrs.

- Later in the day (towards the afternoon) two (2) additional large airtankers were ordered by the Station Fire IC.

- The statements from night shift dispatcher (Ms. Hawthorne) and from the day shift dispatcher (Ms. Mercado) validate and support the sequence stated above.

**Contact:** Tom Harbour, Director, Fire and Aviation Management, USDA-FS, 202-205-1483