

Unit 1D, Decisions, Activity 3

Read the scenario and login to the online answer system

Your role in this scenario is as the Area Fire Management Officer. You are responsible for wildland fire on 3 million acres of public land. You report to two agency administrators.

On June 30th dry lightning storms start 40 new fires requiring you to set priorities for initial attack. All initial attack firefighting resources on the unit are committed to the highest priority fires. This has been a drought year. This is the time of year that typically has the lowest humidity and record high temperatures occur.

On July 2, lightning ignited a fire 1 - 7 miles west of town. The fire was reported to the Dispatch Center on July 3. This area always has unreliable fire reports, and that has never been a problem. This fire is given a low priority.

Over the next 2 days the fire increases in size, the public expresses more concern about it, and you assign initial attack resources. On the afternoon of July 4 you send two engines to "take care of it". Arriving at 6:30 p.m. at the base of the ridge near the Interstate, the crew sizes up the fire but decide to wait until morning to hike in and begin firefighting efforts.

The next morning (July 4th), a seven person crew from the engines decided as a group to hike 2 ½ hours to the fire, clear a helicopter landing area (H - 1) and start building a fireline on its southwest side. The IA IC had not arrived yet but told the group to go ahead over the radio.

That day, dispatch receives little additional information from the fire. The information that makes it to you is from a crewmember that calls you from a cell phone with a broken message that said "no problem".

You commit aviation resources to other fires.

On the morning of July 6 the crew returned to the fire and worked to clear a second helicopter landing area (H - 2). More smoke reports from the area coming in to the Dispatch center. Later that morning you send smokejumpers to the fire. Upon arrival, a member of the smokejumpers becomes the IC. Information from the IC is that they can "handle it" with the resources they have.

The unit review will ask you the following questions:

At what points do element(s) in the decision process occur?

Are there specific points in this scenario that are decision traps?

List the decision traps encountered.