

BULLETIN

NO.: 22-042
DATE: March 21, 2022
TO: All Personnel
FROM: David Picone, Battalion Chief, Health and Safety Officer
SUBJECT: Incident Review – Cal Fire – Highway Vehicle Accident

Please find attached the Informational Summary Report (Incident Review) for an incident that occurred on March 5, 2022. A fire engine was parked along the highway, on the scene of a vegetation fire when it was struck by a civilian vehicle.

- **Refer to SDFD Operations Manual**
 - **SI 10 Section 04 Safety Communications**

Any questions should be directed through the chain of command.

Don't hesitate to contact the Health and Safety Office at SDFDHealth&Safety@sandiego.gov with comments or areas of improvement. For all other questions, contact HSO/Battalion Chief David Picone at 619.533.4466 or dpicone@sandiego.gov.



Wellness Resources QR code:
login: sdfd password: wellness
or call toll free **833-SDFD-HSO (733-3476)**





Bill Weiser
Fire Chief

CAL FIRE Riverside County Fire Department Health and Safety Bureau

Vehicle Accident

March 5, 2022

Highway

22-CA-RRU-034296

SUMMARY

Fire engine was parked along the highway, on scene of a vegetation fire when it was struck by a civilian vehicle.

CONDITIONS

Weather:

Temperature: 50° Fahrenheit

Relative Humidity: 61%

Winds: Calm

Visibility: Clear

Road Conditions: Dry

Topography: Level Roadway

Make/Model of Equipment: Smeal, Type I Engine

Health & Safety AAR



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SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

On March 5th, 2022 at 22:45:38, units from the Coachella and Indio Battalions were dispatched to a vegetation fire in the area of Highway 86 and Avenue 50 in the City of Coachella.

22:55:56; The first arriving unit (Engine 79) reported a 100 x 20 spot, North Bound Highway 86, just south of Avenue 50 and assumed the Highway IC.

22:57:49; Engine 86 arrived on scene, spotting on the shoulder of North Bound Highway 86 approximately 300' in front of Engine 79 to extinguish a spot fire.

Engine 79 spotted, in accordance with Riverside County Fire Department Policy 31701, in a blocking position of the #2 and emergency lanes at the scene.

Firefighters pulled a 200' wildland preconnected 1½" hose from left rear hose bed and advanced to the fire while the engineer engaged the pump and charged the line from the pump panel.

At approximately 22:59, Just as the Engine 79 Engineer turned away from the pump panel (to his right) and stepped toward the L1 (brass box compartment), the engine was struck by a GMC Yukon traveling at highway speed, impacting the engine's driver side rear cab corner right in front of the pump panel. (Posted Speed Limit is 65 MPH).

The Engineer states that he was about 2 feet out from the side of the engine at the time of impact. The Yukon just missed him as it went by and he did not hear it coming.

22:59:49; The Incident Commander requested AMR, two additional engines and a Battalion Chief, Code-3, reporting that engine 79 had been struck by a vehicle.

All crews were immediately accounted for and confirmed none had suffered injuries.

The civilian driver initially attempted to flee the scene but was detained at Engine 86 where he was also checked for injuries and confirmed to have none.

The impact of the collision moved the apparatus with such force that the engine ended up nearly parallel to the #2 lane.

23:08; Engines 87 and 39 arrived on scene, spotting adjacent to the incident on the frontage road (Avenue 50) and took over fire and pumping operations for Engine 79.



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INJURIES/DAMAGES

No injuries to the engine crews or civilian driver.

The fire engine sustained significant damage to the driver side cab and front axle, deemed unreparable and declared a total loss.

The civilian vehicle had significant front-end damage.

SAFETY ISSUES FOR REVIEW

Vehicles traveling at highway speeds have longer perception and reaction times resulting in longer stopping distances.

Distracted drivers pose significant safety risks to response personnel.

Review of [Handbook 1756 \(Traffic Control\)](#) & [Riverside County FD Policy 31701\(Traffic Operations & Safety SOG\)](#).

INCIDENTAL ISSUES/LESSONS LEARNED

Situational awareness is paramount.

The proper spotting of the apparatus resulted in all crew members on scene being protected by the apparatus, avoiding serious injury or death.

When working roadway incidents, always be aware of your surroundings. (The engineer of E-79 was within feet of being caught in the incident as a casualty.)

When responding to roadway incidents, consider early requests for Law Enforcement to assist with scene safety, lane closures and traffic control.

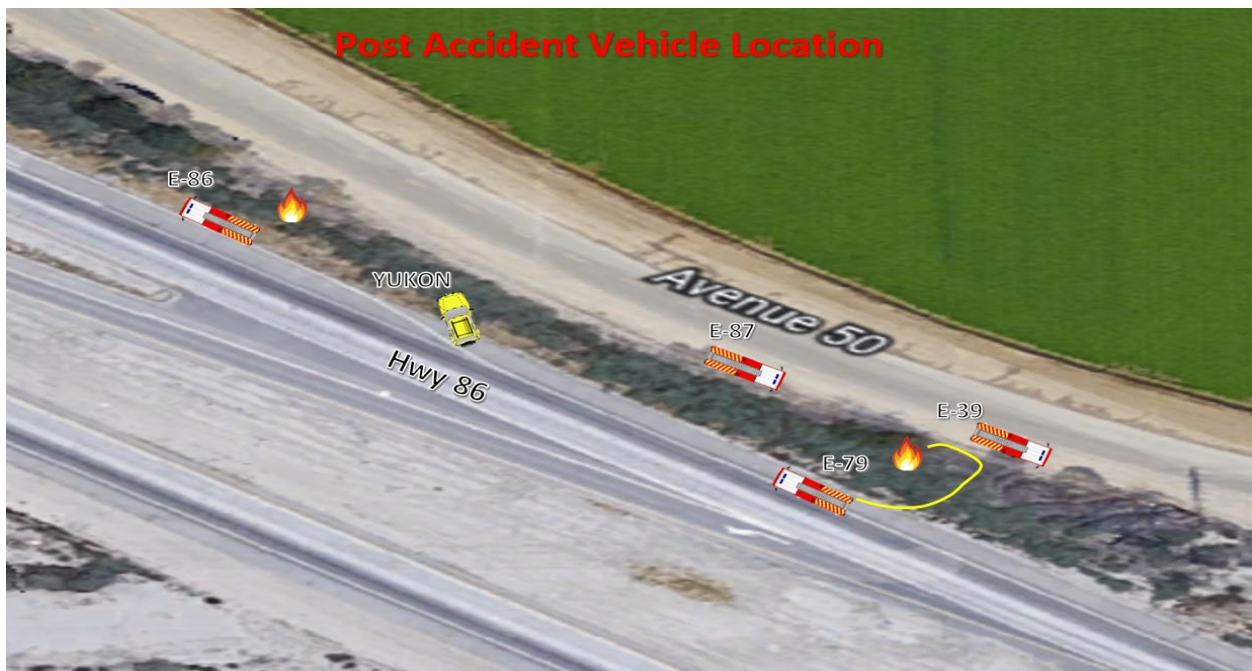
If a second blocking engine is not available to protect the pumping engine, consider placing a lookout downstream of the incident to provide additional situational awareness to the pump operator.



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PHOTOS/SITE DIAGRAMS/MAPS





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Civilian Vehicle Final Point of Rest

