



# Yavapai County Sheriff's Office

Deputy Report for Incident 13-021744

**Nature:** Fire

**Address:** yarnell hill fire

**Location:** SW44S

Yarnell AZ 85362

**Offense Codes:** ASST, DBOD, FIRE

**Received By:** Pierson, C

**How Received:** O

**Agency:** YCSO

**Responding Officers:** Joy, S, Vanderhoven, J, Puertas, C, Kite, B, Busone, V, Bollen, R, Dannison, M, Derrickson, R, Barbaro, F, Stover, E, Newnum, J, Hunt, B, Russell, J, Bricker, M, Hooten, L, Martin, R, Dارت, V, Kimbriel, B., Franklin, S, Eller, C, Medina, E, Bromley, C, Leitzman, J, Leedham, J, Rivera, RS, Barnes, R, Lincoln, J., Jones, J, Williams, D, Tieman, T, Boelts, T, Rousselle, P, Nakayama, C, Ashby, D., Silvernale, B, Stumpf, E, Meza, J, Mitchell, T, Nicol, T., Derry, R, Sisley, R, De Bartolo, J, Cloudt, S, Taylor, G, Schultz, B, Auvenshine, N, Thunstedt, W, Romine, D, Speights, D, Burch, M, Tufano, J, Garcia, MS, Nelson, C, Howard, C, Sialega, P, Heller, C, Bell, M, Davidson, H, Bain, M, Salantri, P, Winemiller, G, Santana, A, Appleby, P, Cicchirillo, V, McGinnis, D, Lowman, S, Craven, C, Garnett, S, Waak, K, Johnson, R, Myhre, C, Clouse, C, Alvarez, O, Russell, W, Bleak, W, Steffey, M, Warburton, SE, Crayser, M, Blakley, SC, Poole, R, Johnson, L., PVROV, Stevens, J, Rumpf, B, Lopez, R, Skaggs, W, Krumm, B, Swager, R, Rhoades, J, Hansen, A, Franklin, D, Rodriguez, A, Huante, L, Whisenand, D, Diskin, R, Moralez, D, Peel, J, Moncrieff, S, Newell, T, Pierce, M, McCall, R, Johnson, Paul, Mitchell, C, Harper, K, Farrier, J, Moody, L, Isaacs, L, Russell, A, Chaves, S, Shrum, H, D2966, Baldauf, C, Smith, CR, Godina, C, Lall, J, Byers, S, Dillahunty, WD, Reed, S., Freemyer, N, Poling, M, Moya, DA, Lewis, M, J9318, Zavos, D, TF01, Stormo, A, Colvin, P, Jaramillo, A, Martin, M, Alvarez, F, Morgan, J

**Responsible Officer:** McDormett, J

**Disposition:** TRA 07/17/13

**When Reported:** 01:17:15 06/30/13

**Occurred Between:** 01:16:28 06/30/13 and 01:16:28 06/30/13

**Assigned To:**

**Detail:**

**Date Assigned:** \*\*/\*\*/\*\*

**Status:**

**Status Date:** \*\*/\*\*/\*\*

**Due Date:** \*\*/\*\*/\*\*

**Complainant:** 106079

**Last:** PRESCOTT NA-  
TIONAL  
FOREST

**First:** FOREST  
SUPRVISR

**Mid:**

**DOB:** \*\*/\*\*/\*\*

**Dr Lic:**

**Address:** 344 S Cortez St.

**Race:**

**Sex:**

**Phone:** (928)777-5700

**City:** Prescott, AZ 86303 4398

## Offense Codes

**Reported:**

**Observed:** FIRE Fire

**Additional Offense:** ASST Agency Assist

**Additional Offense:** DBOD Dead Body

**Additional Offense:** FIRE Fire

## Circumstances

EVID Evidence Booked

FRST Forest  
LT10 Field/Woods

<b>Responding Officers:</b>	<b>Unit :</b>
Joy, S	N17
Vanderhoven, J	S64
Puertas, C	S74
Kite, B	F35
Busone, V	S72
Bollen, R	S66
Dannison, M	N49
Derrickson, R	A89
Barbaro, F	N01
Stover, E	N53
Newnum, J	201
Hunt, B	206
Russell, J	Y02
Bricker, M	S68
Hooten, L	F22
Martin, R	S01
Dartt, V	S25
Kimbriel, B.	S34
Franklin, S	N43
Eller, C	J8431
Medina, E	J8056
Bromley, C	D62
Leitzman, J	T27
Leedham, J	D43
Rivera, RS	S70
Barnes, R	S19
Lincoln, J.	J8263
Jones, J	T11
Williams, D	C17
Tieman, T	F51
Boelts, T	C01
Rousselle, P	T17
Nakayama, C	J9028
Ashby, D.	S15
Silvernale, B	D14
Stumpf, E	J7660
Meza, J	T22
Mitchell, T	J7000
Nicol, T.	N909
Derry, R	N927
Sisley, R	N925

De Bartolo, J	S935
Cloudt, S	N905
Taylor, G	S933
Schultz, B	J8013
Auvenshine, N	E01
Thunstedt, W	J7528
Romine, D	D47
Speights, D	N928
Burch, M	J8552
Tufano, J	D25
Garcia, MS	J9314
Nelson, C	J9537
Howard, C	D9318
Sialega, P	J5254
Heller, C	N907
Bell, M	D20
Davidson, H	D9207
Bain, M	S910
Salantri, P	S924
Winemiller, G	D65
Santana, A	J7212
Appleby, P	D60
Cicchirillo, V	J5689
McGinnis, D	S43
Lowman, S	D66
Craven, C	J8175
Garnett, S	E27
Waak, K	E20
Johnson, R	S55
Myhre, C	S12
Clouse, C	N26
Alvarez, O	N27
Russell, W	J6036
Bleak, W	J9208
Steffey, M	D69
Warburton, SE	E30
Crapser, M	S58
Blakley, SC	N42
Poole, R	E59
Johnson, L.	R22
PVROV	PVROV
Stevens, J	D70
Rumpf, B	E24
Lopez, R	S23

Skaggs, W	J8686
Krumm, B	N54
Swager, R	S33
Rhoades, J	D67
Hansen, A	E21
Franklin, D	E32
Rodriguez, A	J8546
Huante, L	N15
Whisenand, D	D9266
Diskin, R	C23
Moralez, D	S69
Peel, J	J5313
Moncrieff, S	E45
Newell, T	D19
Pierce, M	E23
McCall, R	S48
Johnson, Paul	N22
Mitchell, C	J9304
Harper, K	E29
Farrier, J	E47
Moody, L	S32
Isaacs, L	J4746
Russell, A	N37
Chaves, S	D22
Shrum, H	E44
D2966	D2966
Baldauf, C	A87
Smith, CR	S49
Godina, C	E46
Lall, J	T30
Byers, S	J7758
Dillahunty, WD	N951
Reed, S.	N29
Freemyer, N	E33
Poling, M	C27
Moya, DA	S51
Lewis, M	N38
J9318	J9318
Zavos, D	C24
TF01	TF01
Stormo, A	J9086
Colvin, P	J9091
Jaramillo, A	E11
Martin, M	S47

Alvarez, F                            S53  
Morgan, J                            S45

**Responsible Officer:** McDormett, J

**Received By:** Pierson, C

**How Received:** O Officer Report

**When Reported:** 01:17:15 06/30/13

**Judicial Status:**

**Misc Entry:** 6863

**Agency:** YCSO

**Last Radio Log:** 06:04:36 07/15/13 98

**Clearance:** ACI Assigned to CIB

**Disposition:** TRA Date: 07/17/13

**Occurred between:** 01:16:28 06/30/13

**and:** 01:16:28 06/30/13

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**Modus Operandi:**

**Description :**

**Method :**

**Involvements**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>
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**Narrative**

\*\* Investigation Narrative Case agent report

**Synopsis:**

The evening of 6/30/13 nineteen members of the Granite Mountain Hot Shots died while fighting a wildfire known as the Yarnell Hill Fire. The cause of the fire was determined to be a lightning strike. There is no known criminal component regarding the incident. The deaths have been ruled as accidental. This report will articulate my involvement.

**Narrative:**

On Sunday evening 6/30/13 Det. Sgt. John Johnson contacted me asking if I would be able to assist and act as a liaison to the state investigators investigating the incident. I was asked to be in Yarnell at 0700 on 7/1/13. At about 0410 hours Det. Lt. Tom Boelts called me and asked that I be in Yarnell as soon as possible.

In 07/1/13 shortly after 0530 I arrived at the briefing area located on Hays Ranch Road. I was directed to go with Sgt. Dave Williams to the incident site. Evidence tech (ET) Sharon Boyle accompanied us.

The incident site is located off of Ridgeway in Yarnell. As we drove through the neighborhood to the incident site it was clearly evident that the fire had destroyed much of the neighborhood. Fire was still spewing from ruptured propane lines. The incident location where the firefighters perished was located past a ranch and up a hill. A make shift road had been bull dozed to the scene overnight. At the foot of this hill were numerous members of the Prescott Fire Department (PFD). I was told that PFD were waiting for us to recover the remains of the fallen men so they could bring the deceased down the hill for transport to the medical examiner's office (ME).

Aside from Sgt. Williams, ET Boyle and I, the following YCSO employees assisted the recovery process: Sheriff Scott Mascher, Capt. Jeff Newnum, Lt. Boelts, ET Katie Waldock, Det. Todd Swaim and forest patrol deputies Larry Hooten and Tommy Tieman. On arrival the fallen men were under tarps that had been placed over them by the fire fighters that had discovered the bodies. The ET's took 360 degree photos before removing the tarps. The tarps were removed, additional photographs were taken, and FARO, which is a 3D photography system, was employed to further document the scene. Refer to photographs and FARO disk for further. I asked Dep. Tieman to GPS the incident location. The GPS location is N34 (degrees) 13.277 minutes W112 (degrees) 46.655 minutes The GPS location was taken roughly in the center of the fallen men. To GPS each body would not yield any substantive results as there is a built in discrepancy of several feet in any direction from the true GPS locations.

A numbering system was devised in order to recall the positioning of the individual firefighters for accuracy, historical use, tracking, and investigative purposes. It was evident that not all the men were in shelters, although all or most of the shelters appeared to have been deployed. Most of the men in their shelters were clothed or partially clothed. It was decided that any shelters in which a firefighter was obviously in would be sent to the medical examiner's office along with the body. In these cases the bodies were not separated from the shelter. Any personal belongings or other items attached to the man or the shelter were also sent to the ME. This was done to keep personal belongings, to as great a degree as possible, with the individual for identification and for eventual release of personal property to family. Shelters, radios, firefighting equipment, and any items that could not be readily associated with any particular decedent were left at the scene at this point. One of the reasons behind this was that the state investigative team wanted those items left behind so they could conduct their investigation at a later time. More photographs were taken as the men were being placed into body bags.

As each man was placed in a body bag the body bag was carried out of the immediate area and the bag were lined up numerically and readied for transport

down the hill by PFD.

Throughout the process all the remains of the firefighters were treated professionally, and with the care, dignity and honor that each of these heroes deserved.

We left the scene, with a deputy remaining at the scene with the 19 American flags that PFD would use to cover the body bags and honor the firefighters. Once the recovery team was down the hill three PFD vehicles went up the hill. Members of PFD placed the flags on the body bags that contained their fallen men. They transported the fallen firefighters down the hill, two to a vehicle, and continued the process until all the men were off the hill. A Phoenix FD chaplain said prayers over each member of the 19 Granite Mountain Hotshots before they were placed into ME vans. The vans were escorted via procession to the Maricopa Medical Examiner's Office, where the autopsies would be performed the next day.

The following day, 07/02/13, I, along with ET Waldock, went to the medical examiner's office in Phoenix, arriving at about 0800. Lt. Boelts was there when we arrived. Honor guards were also in place. Honor guards had also been in place throughout the night. All the firefighters were identified on this day largely through either dental records by forensic odontologist Dr. John Piakis or through distinguishing tattoos or other identifiers that left no doubt as to the individual identity of each man. Photographs were taken by the ME staff. I was advised that a disk of the photos would not be ready for a few days. I was later advised that the cause of death was accidental and that the manner of death was a combination of thermal injuries and smoke and carbon monoxide inhalation. As of the writing of this report I have not received the autopsy reports.

Personal property and shelters were separated into a corresponding body bag and were transported to the YCSO evidence unit.

What follows is an accounting of the numbers assigned to the decedents while on the hill, the Maricopa Medical Examiner number, and the name of the firefighter associated with each:

#1/13-04442/ Wade Parker  
#2/13-04425/ Sean Misner  
#3/13-04443/ Travis Turbyfill  
#4/13-04428/ Kevin Justin Woyjeck  
#5/13-04427/ Clayton Whitted  
#6/13-04426/ Christopher MacKenzie  
#7/13-04431/ Dustin DeFord  
#8/13-04430/ William Warneke  
#9/13-04435/ Eric Marsh  
#10/13-04429/ John Percin Jr  
#11/13-04434/ Andrew Ashcraft  
#12/13-04433/ Travis Carter  
#13/13-04438/ Anthony Rose  
#14/13-04432/ Joe Thurston  
#15/13-04436/ Jesse Steed  
#16/13-04437/ Grant McKee  
#17/13-04441/ Scott Norris  
#18/13-04440/ Garret Zuppiger  
#19/13-04439/ Robert Caldwell

On 7/3/13 I spoke to Jerry Payne (602-771-1416) who is a deputy state forester with the Arizona State Forestry Division. Jerry advised that the state investigation would be conducted by members of the state forestry divisions from other states. He said the lead investigator would be a Brad Mayhew (831-247-2811) and that Brad would contact me. I received a call from Brad and he requested we meet at the Incident Command Center, which is located in Peeples Valley. Brad wanted me to escort him to the scene. ET Waldock and I met the team at 1615 hours. We went to the incident location, which was guarded by YCSO. The investigative team took photographs and started their examination of the scene. They were given a disk of the photos that YCSO had taken as well as a copy of the FARO that was conducted on 7/1/13. Waldock also showed them the FARO results on a laptop.

We were waiting for the state investigative team to give us the OK to collect any remaining personal items when Brad asked me if we could collect the remaining shelters and radios so they could inspect these items in a controlled environment. I agreed as they did not have packaging materials, a feasible way to transport or store the items, or a means to properly inventory the items. It should be noted that the winds were very fierce at this time and created a sandstorm affect that made it difficult to operate. Dep. Brian Kite, Waldock, and I collected the remaining shelters and portable radios that we located at the scene. These items are numbered #301-#319. Photos were taken from a perspective that would hopefully show where these items were in conjunction with where the individual remains had been. We then went back and collected the remaining personal items that we could locate (#401-407). It was my understanding that the fire department or designee would be collecting the remaining items, including indistinguishable back packs, water bottles, axes, remnants of chainsaws, etc. Photos were taken throughout the process. Refer to photos and evidence submittal forms for further details. I contacted Lt. Boelts and requested that YCSO guard the entrance to the incident location until all items are removed from the scene. I was advised that this was going to be the case.

On 07/04/13 Lt. Boelts, ET John File, and I went through the body bags that were used by the medical examiner's office to place the items collected from the decedents. Please note that these body bags were not the body bags that the remains had been transported in. Inside each body bag was a separate plastic bag (or bags) that contained the personal property of the fire fighter. These items were photographed and repackaged for presentation to the fire department. The fire department would eventually be giving these items to the families. The only items that were separated from the personal belongings were cell phones. Data down loads will be attempted for the state investigators and the phones will then be returned to the fire department and eventually the families. All other items such as shelters, boots, helmets, etc remained in the body bags for examination by the state inspectors. I was told items such as boots and helmets will eventually be released back to the families after the state conducts its investigation. Note that Lt. Boelts created a spreadsheet articulating what personal property was located in each bag with corresponding name, YCSO number (1-19) and medical examiner case number.

On 07/04/13 these items, along with the spread sheet, were presented by myself and Lt. Boelts to Rob Zazueta of the Chino Valley Fire Department, for eventual presentation to the families.

On 07/08/13 I spoke to Det. Josh Brazell who said he would not be able to Cellebrite most of the phones due to their condition. Cellebrite is a program that can pull data off of a phone. Brazell did say he was able to cellebrite the phone associated with Christopher MacKenzie. He was not able to cellebrite phones #401 and #405, which were collected at the scene on 7/3/13, due to their condition. He was not able to cellebrite the phone associated with Robert Caldwell because it is a password protected Apple phone. #401 and #405 are not associated with any particular fire fighter at this point. I had evidence assign #326 to MacKenzie's phone and #327 to Caldwell's phone.

On 07/09/13 I received the cellebrite information for item 326 (MacKenzie phone). I made a copy of the information for YCSO as a backup and gave Randy Okron with the state investigators team a copy. I was advised that another phone was located at the scene during a final comb through by the fire department and that phone had been melted to a backpack. There was apparently some coloration left on the phone and the information I received was the only firefighter that had a phone of that color was Clayton Whitted. I picked up the phone from PFD the next day (7/10/13) and I assigned it number #324. The phone was an I Phone. It should be noted that in the packaging for this phone were a number of nails and eyelets that appeared to come from a boot or boots. I separated these from the phone, placed them in their own package, and assigned these items number 325. I articulated in the evidence sheet that items 324 and 325 had been packaged together.

On 07/09/13 I spoke to Capt. Harrison 602-478-2954 of ACTIC. ACTIC analyzes many of the phones we have problems getting data out of. Capt. Harrison indicated

they would gladly assist.

On 07/10/13 I went to evidence and I was told that the state investigators had removed some personal items from the shelters while they were inspecting them. The items were taken from the shelters that were collected at the scene on 7/3 and have not been associated with any fire fighter at this point. I assigned numbers to each item and photographed each item. I gave Lt. Boelts copies of the photos for possible identification purposes. A watch from shelter #304 was assigned #321. A knife from shelter 306 was assigned #323. From shelter #305 a cell phone (320) and a knife (322) were removed. It should be noted that we did not previously attempt to remove any items attached to the shelters as we left those items in place for the state investigators.

On 07/10/13 Bruce Hanna and Brett Steurer of OSHA came to the office and asked for me. They had been given my contact information. They said they were conducting their own separate investigation into the incident. They asked to eventually go to the scene once they had an "expert" in place. They asked to view the shelters, photos and reports. I contacted Lt. Boelts who said it would be OK to give them (what we have) providing they provide us with the request on a letterhead. I had them direct the letter to Lt. Boelts as I would be away for a couple weeks. I gave them Lt. Boelts contact information. I gave them my card. They gave me their cards and a pamphlet showing the laws that gave them the authorization to ask for these things. I gave copies of these items to Lt. Boelts. We are awaiting the letter before taking any further action.

On 07/11/13 I dropped off phones #320, 324, 327, 401, and 405 to ACTIC. Analyst Roger Hoover took the items. Roger called me back later and said he could not bypass the password on 327. He was going to contact Apple. He asked if he could pry open the burnt phones to get to the motherboard of the phones as he may able to retrieve data in that manner. I told him data retrieval was important and to do what was necessary but while doing so I asked him to preserve the integrity of the phones as much as possible as these may be going back to the families. An ACTIC Examination Request Form was filled out and that form articulates what I asked ACTIC to do with the phones. A chain of custody form was also filled out.

On 07/12/13 I spoke to Randy Okron (406-531-1570) and told him we were having trouble getting into one of the phones and asked if he had any contact with the family liaisons. Randy told me he did and would see what he could do about getting a password for the Caldwell phone. Randy was provided a copy of the ACTIC form I filled out.

This has been my involvement in this case up to this point.

Date, Time, Reporting Officer:  
Tue Jul 16 10:43:08 MST 2013 Det J McDormett #5472

Report Approved:  
Sergeant John Johnson #6863  
Wed Jul 17 09:58:46 MST 2013

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Responsible LEO:

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Approved by:

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Date