

(b) (6) To (b) (6)  
(b) (6) cc  
bcc (b) (6)  
Subject (b) (6)

History: This message has been forwarded.

(b) (6):

In (b) (6) I forwarded a request to yourself and (b) (6) from the Wisconsin Division of Criminal Investigations (DCI) regarding DTO training. Specifically, the request was for expert USFS LEI agents and patrol officers to conduct a training session at the upcoming Wisconsin Narcotics Officers Association Conference. DCI came to us because they know that we have an expertise in this area and we are experiencing a serious DTO crisis in the last 2-3 years. This was a great opportunity for us to showcase our agency, our talents, and for us to assist one of our partners in this very important fight; a duty that we all share and took oaths to support. As I pointed out at the time, this was also a great opportunity to train closely with a partner agency so that we could all work together more efficiently on future operations; this was a chance to create a force multiplier for both agencies and the citizens we serve.

From the very beginning the proposal and request were met with resistance. The eventual, and much delayed response, was that we did not have the money to support this (though the cost is quite minimal, especially when compared to the eventual benefit gained.) In (b) (6), after further discussion, (b) (6) agreed to the proposal. The conference was scheduled for (b) (6), so we had clearly wasted a good deal of preparation and coordination time. As I began making coordinations with FS DTO experts in California, I was surprised to learn that the training would require prior approval at the Washington Office (WO) level. Apparently, this is the direction handed down from the WO and the (b) (6)

Over roughly the last three months, DCI has inquired numerous times as to the status of their request so that they could plan their training schedule accordingly and make all the proper coordinations. This situation is painting a very ugly picture of the US Forest Service, my personal and professional embarrassment notwithstanding. Again, I am embarrassed by the lack of leadership my organization is showing on this, and other issues. It is my understanding that the request has languished in Washington for nearly a month now. Again we are basking in the rays of mediocrity, in fact, mediocrity lends us too much credit in this instance. This is a minor request which should have been easily facilitated in a matter of hours.

I have worked very hard, to establish, and in some cases repair, relations with our cooperators in this area. As you know, and is regularly espoused by our LEI chain of command, our relations with partnering agencies is crucial to our overall success. This is another example of how we are putting off yet another cooperator, one that has been there for us in times of need; it is unfortunate that we refuse to reciprocate. Our behavior of late is akin to burning bridges, not building them. It is important to note that this was not a media request or a presentation to a civilian group, this was a request for our law enforcement personnel to assist other law enforcement personnel. Why the approval is needed in this case is beyond me, but even if it was deemed necessary this should have been done in hours, not months. Unfortunately, I think the opportunity has passed because of our cumbersome and inefficient policies.

I understand that there is a possibility that some of this direction is predicated upon USDA level directives. Perhaps there is a misinterpretation of the current directives. In either case, we expect our leadership to lead, we expect them to act, and we expect them to support us in addressing this issue at whatever level it needs to be addressed. In the Forest Service we have a great many "leadership" teams and "leadership" committees, but to the folks in the field it seems that very little "leadership" is being practiced. Using the term so loosely is a discredit to the many Americans who fought and/or died "Leading", it is an insult to the ones who have really made a difference, in various fields of endeavor, by genuine, solid leadership.

Please address this soon, as the poorly thought out policies and lack of leadership are incredibly detrimental to our operations. The morale in the region is already dangerously low and the confidence in our management is significantly lower. The citizens deserve, and are paying for, more than this in-action. With every ounce of my being, I am resisting the urge to throw my arms in the air and adopt the widely accepted philosophy "If my own agency doesn't care.....why should I?" In fact, many of us feel this way, I hope that others will come forward and express their concerns with the direction of our program as well.

After my last correspondence to the (b) (6) and (b) (6) (b) (6) made it clear that (b) (6) does not want me to contact the (b) (6) or the (b) (6) of the FS any more; (b) (6) also gave direction that I am not to contact (b) (6) directly as well. (b) (6) advised that if I felt it necessary to speak to the (b) (6) (b) (6) would facilitate a conversation. Several weeks ago, I requested such a meeting and as usual have not heard back. I am making the request again, furthermore, I request that you forward this email to (b) (6) (b) (6) and (b) (6).

Respectfully,

(b) (6)

US Forest Service  
Law Enforcement and Investigations  
(b) (6)