



Forest Service

Eastern Region
Law Enforcement & Investigations
North Central Zone

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To: (b) (6)

The purpose of this memo is twofold, to vent my frustration and seek advice and understanding. As you know, back in 2007 I was promoted to (b) (6) of the North Central Zone. This promotion came after working for the previous (b) (6) years as an LEO on the Huron-Manistee. I mention this obvious fact to point out that my concerns started back while I served as an LEO and have continued into my current position, frankly, a decade.

As an LEO on the HMNF for (b) (6) years I only had the opportunity to work with my area agent once. This was at the final stages of an arson investigation. This case was worked for (b) (6) years prior without any involvement from (b) (6). I consulted SA's out of region for advice and guidance. (b) (6) was detailed to assist me for approximately one week. Fire even paid for a fire investigator, (b) (6) to help me with this case. Back then this disturbed me and now after (b) (6) years of continuing to see the pattern I am infuriated. As a tax payer who treasures the National Forest I can't help but to ask myself, why spend all those federal funds on investigators when we have an agent stationed 90 minutes away? I also wonder why this crime went unnoticed for easily (b) (6) years before my arrival to that district. How can a forest have dozens of undetermined, suspicious fires and nobody notice?

As an LEO, I regularly forwarded reports up through my (b) (6) (b) (7)(C) for case assignment, not once in (b) (6) years was a case assigned and investigated by (b) (6) (b) (6) repeatedly shared (b) (6) frustrations about (b) (6). (b) (6) did the right thing by bringing those concerns to (b) (6) supervisor that I trust forwarded up. As a new LEO, I feel I was cheated out of developmental opportunities because I never had the luxury of working with a Special Agent. At that time I literally couldn't put "Special Agent" as a career goal because I had never seen what they did.

As a (b) (6) I have repeatedly expressed my concerns through both written and verbal communications since 2007. Here are a few to refresh your memory although it should not be considered all inclusive;

1. May 2007, a roller chopper was discovered missing from the Baldwin RD. This was reported by the district LEO. The LEO immediately notified the SA and began the investigation. (b) (6) concerns were that this had been scrapped out because of the value of scrap metal at the present time. To my knowledge, the LEO's knowledge and the employees' there was no involvement in this case from (b) (6). This item was valued at \$20,000.
2. On 6/2007 the Gallion Road Fire occurred on the HMNF, this fire burned several homes. A preliminary investigation was conducted by (b) (6) and a MI Conservation Officer in which they determined it to be caused by a bonfire at an underage drinking



party. This area has a very small high school and as we all know, it's only a matter of time and one of those teenagers would spill. (b) (6) knew about this fire from the get go and never took one step to investigate past what the officers did. The case remains unsolved. Wouldn't be an interesting fact to share with the insurance companies that handed out hundreds of thousands of dollars on an uninvestigated fire. A fire where there was a strong lead.

3. While in the process of moving in August 2007, I was contacted by an FPO on the St. Ignace district regarding a possible marijuana garden. A plant(s) was found on a timber sale. During this time, I had movers at my home. (b) (6), (b) (6) (b) (6) was at FLETC, (b) (6) were unavailable. The most logical person to call was (b) (6). (b) (6) was briefed on the situation and the incident turned over to him. I later received a call from the Hiawatha FPO indicating that (b) (6) was told by (b) (6) to go check out the garden and get back with (b) (6). The FPO called because this direction is in direct conflict with policy and is frankly unsafe. I shared this with the RO.
4. 9/2007 and FPO on the HMNF was threatened and intimidated. This initial notification came directly from the FPO to both (b) (6). I. (b) (6) was at field training and unavailable. Neither victim nor any employees of the district heard from (b) (6) for quite some time. Upon the LEO's return and after hearing nothing from the SA, on 10/26/07 (b) (6) began investigating this case. (b) (6) interviewed the victim, identified the suspect, provided a picture to verify it was the correct person, interviewed the suspect... Eventually (b) (6) took the case and interviewed the suspect (after the (b) (6) had already contacted (b) (6) who admitted to everything but was told that the AUSA wouldn't take the case because it had been too long since the incident and if it was that important then why did we wait so long.
5. Early 2008, two cold case homicides were re-opened that possibly occurred on NF, one in the St. Ignace area and the other in the Baldwin area. I clearly understand we don't take the lead on these typically but we certainly should communicate with the investigative team for pete's sake. I certainly think we have an obligation to assist if we can to help solve two young girls' murders. One was the daughter of (b) (6). (b) (6) became the contact for one and (b) (6) for the other.
6. April 2008, a chainsaw theft occurred on the Baldwin RD. Because of the prison crews working in the area it was assumed they did it. Again, (b) (6) was notified but didn't feel it worthy to investigate. Somehow the (b) (6) was convinced that this needed to be looked at and assigned it to (b) (6). (b) (6) made the trip and worked with the district. These were valued \$5000.
7. May 2008, fence and posts were discovered missing from the Baldwin RD. This was reported to the (b) (6) through the (b) (6). Again, a concern was expressed over this being sold for scrap metal and suggestions for looking at area scrap yards was made but never acted upon. Valued at approx. \$2500.
8. August 2008, a welder was discovered missing from the Baldwin RD. Same scenario, same ending. Valued at \$500.

no more I can do. You are contacted by (b) (6), simply because (b) (6) won't do (b) (6) job.

17. July 2009, an FPO is assaulted on the AuSable River. Apparently (b) (6) is off. (b) (6) obtains suspect info, sends to (b) (6). Neither victim, (b) (6) hear from (b) (6) to know if anything is progressing with this investigation. In the end we find out the status of the case through an email from a MI conservation officer that sees an article.
18. July 21, 2009. While on the HMNF I decide to meet with (b) (6) have a "heart to heart" if you will to discuss all the concerns we have, the lack of response. I want to try to understand where (b) (6) is coming from. I go into (b) (6) office, where the door is propped open, surveillance cameras charging, maps with garden locations on desk, IRs and VN's laying on the LEO's desk with PII. (b) (6) is nowhere to be found, I check with forest dispatch, they say they haven't seen (b) (6) all afternoon. I wait until 1730 to leave, am the last one in the office and only one in the parking lot, still no (b) (6) I lock up the LE office.
19. August 2009, (b) (6) threat case on east HIA. (b) (6) contacts (b) (6) but is told to handle and interview (b) (6). Again, no agent involvement.
20. September 2009, (b) (6) requests a K9 sweep of the office because of a report of employee smoking marijuana. (b) (6) contacts (b) (6) because of the potential of an internal investigation and asks that (b) (6) assist him. (b) (6) advises that (b) (6) not available and not comfortable with doing internal investigations. (b) (6) contacts (b) (6) who sends an email (9/18/09) telling (b) (6) what (b) (6) needs to do. (b) (6) contacts (b) (6) to coordinate but (b) (6) says again (b) (6) is not comfortable with internals and will not be helping. Apparently it's acceptable to not follow supervisor instructions. (b) (6) is off the hook again. Had that been an LEO they would have been considered insubordinate.
21. September 2009, Lower landing fire. (b) (6) was made aware, assigned I believe. This case has leads but no action taken by the (b) (6) (b) (6) was notified of these deficiencies.
22. September 2009. Decker Rd Fire. (b) (6) responded initially, flagged off origin, assisted with evacuation, and completed brief interviews. (b) (6) investigation was limited because of nightfall. (b) (6) was heading out first thing in the morning to assist with the WI drug case. (b) (6) was directed to head to that fire in the (b) (6) and (b) (6) was notified. (b) (6) indicated that there was no need for the (b) (6) because (b) (6) wasn't performing any tasks, all was left to the LEO. Upon (b) (6) return (b) (6) completed an SIR because (b) (6) hadn't documented anything.
23. October 2009, (b) (6) gathers reports from area drug teams and enters them into LEIMARS or passes them onto (b) (6). The drug team prefers to deal with the LEO's because of (b) (6)'s lack of communication skills or style. (b) (6) continues to be the main contact for the drug teams, even the team that sits down from (b) (6) office.
24. October 2009, Gamble timber theft. Assigned to (b) (6) because (b) (6) (b) (6) Nothing is mentioned, as of today I'm unsure of what if anything happened.

25. January 2010, I believe this was when you visited my office with (b) (6). During this brief visit I shared several copies of fire IR's with you from all my officers. They are complete and professional. I too shared copies of (b) (6) with you; they were incomplete with the quality of an FPO report.
26. April 2010, the HMNF east side experiences arson fires. (b) (6) being a new FINV asks for assistance from (b) (6). (b) (6) walks along the road talking with the fire staff and calls that an investigation, case closed...caused by exhaust. There is no way on God's green earth that those fires were caused by exhaust. (b) (6) failed to investigate or even attempt. The fires continued, I met up with (b) (6) to visit the area and meet with the MI CO's that were investigating the fires. (b) (6) stands mute. Once (b) (6) talks (b) (6) tells the CO's what to do and instructs them to obtain a tracker on a suspect vehicle (their idea) etc. They make all calls, interviews and sit surveillance. This case continues into the fall of 2010, all the while the CO's are the primary investigating agency. They have not heard from (b) (6) in months. I'm told they have leads but don't feel we're interested. We have to explain to them what (b) (6) role is, they are confused. Fire is upset and an arsonist is still at large. Our image as an agency is tarnished for the umpteenth time and the forest continues to spend millions, yes, millions on suppression.
27. April 2010, equipment has been stolen from the Mio RD. MSP arrests one of our stimulus employees for theft and believes (b) (6) may have some of our equipment. (b) (6) way of investigating is to call the Tpr. And ask (b) (6) to get our stuff back. Case closed for (b) (6) no paper work needed. (b) (6) investigates, obtains confession, gets warrant and recovers equipment. (b) (6) assists with the search warrant.
28. (b) (6) sits in a garden alone, makes a contact with a suspected grower in (b) (6) area. (b) (6) chooses not to advise the local LEO of this operation. Clearly a safety concern.
29. August 2010, I met in the RO with your staff and (b) (6). Nothing came from this meeting. I asked (b) (6) point blank to tell me what (b) (6) had done with the HMNF arson case and (b) (6) would not say, (b) (6) was vague and clearly had no answer. (b) (6) allowed (b) (6) to sit there and refuse to answer. To this day nobody but (b) (6) knows what (b) (6) does. (b) (6) was told to communicate with me weekly, that never happened but in all reality why should you even have to have that conversation with a grown, professional man? I don't care if (b) (6) ever speaks to me; I just want (b) (6) to work. We need an agent.
30. September 2010, (b) (6) receives a report of a large marijuana garden from a bird hunter. (b) (6) takes the bird hunter into the suspected large grow, three Hispanic males run out, most likely armed. They are later arrested. Can we really put an innocent citizen in harm's way like that? Can you imagine the media circus and lawsuit that would have followed if bullets would have started flying and an innocent bird hunter shot because our agent brought (b) (6) into a "large" garden?
31. October 2010, I have never received guidance from the RO on how cases are decided. (i.e. (b) (6) regularly has several marijuana cases going, typically small gardens, 10-30 plants) throughout the months of Aug-October. I'm well aware that they "could" turn into something more substantial but who makes the decision on when we need to re-

prioritize? Is it an appropriate use of an agent's investigative time if all cases are simply handed over to the local drug team to prosecute? Is there any inquiry into how many cases an agent brings to federal court? This fall I offered up my LEO's to assist with several gardens on the HMNF only to later find out that while we spent thousands of dollars in OT to work small (under 100 plants) gardens, the forest to the south only hours away was experiencing large scale DTO grows. To add to my confusion I find out that they had no SA assigned and only 2 LEO's assisting. Who makes decisions like this? Surely an (b) (6) wouldn't have allowed thousands of dollars to be spent on cases that weren't even taken federally when the efforts could have easily been diverted to a large DTO grow.

I share these highlights with you to document the problems and frustrations we have experienced in this zone during my short time as (b) (6). While I realize you have been briefed on several of these incidents it recently came to my attention that nothing had been documented in the past and that the current (b) (6) was left with nothing and was just now building his documentation on (b) (6) deficiencies. This fact disturbs me because I have all this and more documented. I have documents showing that my supervisor forwarded up the chain but what I don't have is what happens next. My suspicions are that nothing has happened. The lack of action has caused a tremendous burden on my zone, contributed to low morale, made a joke of LE&I in the eyes of several forest employees and has certainly caused other agencies to question why we have (b) (6) as an agent. This of course leads all these individuals; LEO's, forest employees, local, state and other federal LE employees and the public to question, what does your upper management do; just allow this type of behavior to continue? Surely they can't be aware of this and still have (b) (6) employed? Then add the fact that (b) (6) is the (b) (6) Forest Service law enforcement official in Michigan and they are appalled.

When I took my current position I was well aware that supervision was difficult but that's why I'm paid at a higher rate. It's my job to manage my program as well as supervise my staff. Supervision includes providing employee development opportunities as well as disciplinary actions when needed. I find no joy in wearing the disciplinarian hat but know it is necessary. I am accountable to the troubled employee, the employees that witness this inaction or wrong action, the forest employees that hold us to a different standard and the public who pays our salary and expects service. Isn't that the standard at an (b) (6) level?

In closing I'd like to share with you my intentions. As a USDA employee I am obligated to report wrong doing, classified as fraud, waste and abuse. All of which describe the situation we have as I see it. Before I jump through all those hoops, I'd like the opportunity to discuss the situation with you and develop a solution to this out of control issue.

Thank you for your time and attention, I look forward to hearing from you.

(b) (6)