

Summary: Tribal Firefighters Convicted of Arson in Tribal Court

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Report Number: 16-0176

We investigated allegations that a tribal fire chief and a volunteer firefighter intentionally set fires on a reservation and subsequently submitted fraudulent claims for pay associated with fighting the fires. The tribal fire department received funding through a P.L. 93-638 Self Determination Contract administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA).

We worked with the BIA to investigate the allegations and confirmed the tribal fire chief and a volunteer firefighter committed arson throughout 2015. Both were convicted in tribal court for their actions, and the tribe subsequently removed both individuals from the tribal fire department.

A Federal Grand Jury indicted the fire chief and volunteer firefighter on four counts of wire fraud associated with fraudulent claims made to the BIA. Those charges were subsequently dismissed.

This is a summary of an investigative report we issued to the Director of the BIA.

