

# **BLUE SHEET**

## **California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)**

### **Preliminary Summary Report of Serious CAL FIRE Injuries, Illnesses, Accidents and Near-Miss Incidents**



#### **Helicopter Power Line Strike**

**August 27, 2009**

**CA-BEU-002830**

**Gloria Incident**

**CA-CSR-000062**

#### **California Southern Region**

This Preliminary Summary Report is intended as an aid in accident prevention, and to provide factual information from the first 24 hours of the accident review. To that end it is published and distributed within a short time frame. Information contained within may be subject to revision as further investigation is conducted, and other reports and documents are received.

**Lookout**

**Communications**

**Escape Routes**

**Safety Zones**

## **SYNOPSIS**

**On August 27, 2009, Helicopter 404 and Crew responded to the “Gloria” Incident in the San Benito-Monterey Unit. The fire was located on the east side of Hwy-101, near of the town of Soledad. While conducting a mapping mission, Copter-404 came in contact with 115 KV transmission power line(s). The Pilot maintained control of the helicopter and safely landed near-by. The Pilot and Fire Captain were not injured and were the only personnel aboard. The power lines fell into unburned vegetation requiring additional suppression.**

## **NARRATIVE**

**On August 27, 2009 at 2:56 pm, resources from the San Benito-Monterey Unit responded to a vegetation fire northeast of the town of Soledad.**

**At approximately 5:05 pm, Copter-404 was dispatched to the “Gloria” Incident from the Columbia Air Attack Base.**

**At 5:50 pm, Copter-404 arrived, deployed Crew-404 and began making bucket drops to support suppression operations.**

**Copter-404 was later tasked to conduct a mapping mission and began by following the fires perimeter. During the flight at approximately 7:12 pm, Copter-404 collided with at least one 115 KV power line, four out of six lines fell to the ground. Copter-404 is equipped with a wire cutting device which functioned properly cutting one or more of the power lines. The Pilot successfully landed Copter-404 without further incident. The damaged power lines ignited additional fires outside the perimeter of the main fire.**

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMMEDIATE CORRECTIVE ACTIONS**

- **Repetitive training provides a controlled response in sudden emergency situations**
  - **Train continuously to build muscle memory**
- **Obtain safety briefings on hazards on or near the fire ground**
- **Maintain situational awareness of known hazards in the area, smoke conditions, and/or lighting conditions changes**