

# Green Sheet Summary



**Norco Conservation Camp**  
**Inmate Firefighter Heat Injury**

**CARRU 043401**

**CACSR 000037**

**May 24, 2006**

**Lookout**

**Communications**

**Escape Routes**

**Safety Zones**

## **SUMMARY**

On May 24, 2006, at 1314 hours, the Norco Camp training crew was engaged in a training hike along a pre-established hiking trail in the Jurupa Hills near Rubidoux, CA. After hiking approximately 1½ -miles, an inmate firefighter became ill, and could not continue the hike. Additional inmates assisted the ill inmate with removing his PPE and cooling him down. The CDF Fire Captain notified the Riverside Unit Emergency Command Center and requested an air ambulance. The other inmates carried the ill inmate to the landing zone. Mercy Air transported the ill inmate to Arrowhead Regional Center for treatment. The inmate was released after eight days of medical treatment.

## **CONDITIONS**

Weather observations recorded from the Clark Training Center RAWS on May 24, 2006 at 1300 hours:

Temperature: 87 F.

Relative Humidity: 29%

Wind Speed: 7 mph / Gusts of 13 mph

Direction: West (269 deg)

## **SEQUENCE OF EVENTS**

On May 23, 2006, the Norco training crew, supervised by a CDF Fire Captain went to the Jurupa Hills, to complete a hose pack hike as part of their firefighter training. This trail is an established training trail just above the Jurupa Cultural Center. The training crew stopped at Riverside Operational Unit Station 18 to pick up hose packs for the trainees. The station personnel were pressure testing the hose therefore hose packs were not available. The Captain decided to complete the training hike without the hose packs. The training crew completed the hike and consumed their lunch at the top of the hill. The Captain noted that Inmate #1 had fallen behind the rest of the training crew during the hike. The Captain informed Inmate #1 that improvement was needed. A previous, but similar incident, with Inmate #1 occurred on May 8, 2006, and was documented on a CDC-128-A.

When the training crew returned to Norco Camp, the inmates were released back to the custody of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR). Inmate #1 did not consume the evening meal provided by the institution but chose to consume soup from his personal locker. Inmate #1 made statements to other inmates that he was "tired" and "light headed". Prior to 2100 hours that evening Inmate #1 also consumed one 16-ounce bottle of water before retiring for the night.

On May 24, 2006, Inmate #1 chose not to get out of bed at 0600 hours to eat the institution provided breakfast. Instead, he slept until the training crew was checked out between 0830 and 0900 hours. While on the crew bus, Inmate #1 stated that he ate an apple. The Captain picked up three (3) additional inmate firefighters from the in-camp crew that the Captain routinely used for lookouts and to assist with the training hike. They are identified as Inmate #2, Inmate #3, and Inmate #4. The Captain also collected two (2) additional portable radios for use by the lookouts.

Prior to arriving at the hiking site, the training crew stopped at RRU stations 14 and 18 to pick up hose packs for each trainee. The Fire Captain, prior to the hike gave a tailgate safety briefing. The Fire Captain instructed the training inmates that this was not a timed evolution and that the only requirement was to complete the hike. This evolution has been referred to as the "graduation hike". Additionally, the Fire Captain instructed the inmates to pace themselves and to stay hydrated. A check of canteens was also made to insure that every training crewmember was topped off prior to beginning the hike.

Three IIPP-6s were completed referencing Heat Acclimation (May 9<sup>th</sup>), Canteens (May 9<sup>th</sup>), and Standards for Survival & Hydration (May 22<sup>nd</sup>).

Inmate #2 was assigned as one of the lookouts to lead the crew on the hike. He was monitoring the front of the training crew and was assigned a portable radio.

Inmate #3 was assigned as one of the lookouts and was posted along the trail as a checkpoint for the passing trainees. He was also assigned a portable radio.

Inmate #4 was assigned as one of the lookouts and was near the back of the trainees, assisting with the hike. He did not have a portable radio.

The Fire Captain hiked at the rear of the crew to monitor trainees. He was equipped with a portable radio.

Inmate #3 was located approximately half way up the hiking trail and observed Inmate #1 sitting down; Inmate #3 responded to Inmate #1's location to investigate; Inmate #3 radioed the Fire Captain advising that Inmate #1 "did not want to continue the hike." Inmate #3 noted that a single one-quart canteen that was issued to Inmate #1 was empty. Inmate #3 assisted Inmate #1 with retrieving his second canteen, which was used to administer water to Inmate #1. A few minutes later, Inmate #3 radioed the Fire Captain to advise him that Inmate #1 was up and walking. Inmate #3 walked with Inmate #1 for approximately ten minutes. Inmate #3 again radioed the Fire Captain and advised that Inmate #1 was sitting on the ground and appeared "not to be looking good." The Fire Captain directed Inmate #3 to begin cooling procedures. The Fire Captain left the last trainee with Inmate #4 and hiked to Inmate #1's location. It took the Fire Captain between five and seven minutes to hike the distance. Upon arrival of the Fire Captain at Inmate #1's location, he observed that Inmate #1 was postured. The Fire Captain administered a sternum rub to Inmate #1 and the response was only a

moan. The Fire Captain contacted the Riverside Emergency Command Center by radio and requested an air ambulance.

Inmate #1's PPE was removed and a canvas tarp that was carried for field repair of chainsaws was used to provide shade for Inmate #1.

The Fire Captain established a landing zone approximately one hundred yards away from their location. This was in lieu of carrying Inmate #1 down the hill, or having him short hauled off the mountain by H-301. Inmate #1 was carried to that location by the other inmates and transported via Mercy Air to San Bernardino Arrowhead Regional Medical Center.

## **INJURIES/DAMAGES**

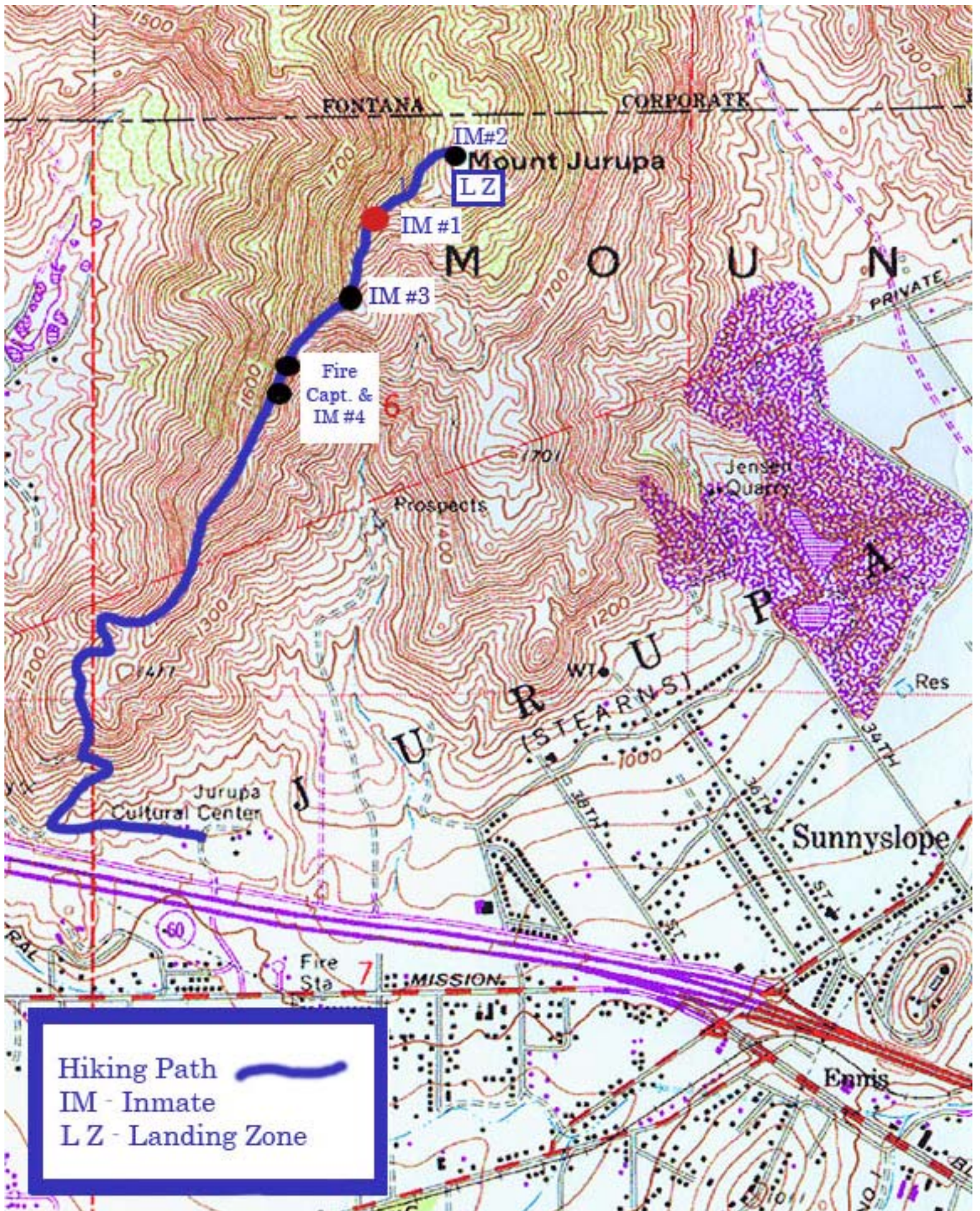
An inmate firefighter trainee became ill while participating in a training hike. The injured inmate was admitted to San Bernardino Arrowhead Regional Medical Center. The inmate firefighter was released after eight days of treatment with a diagnosis of dehydration and jaundice.

## **SAFETY ISSUES FOR REVIEW**

- Inmates assigned to institutional based fire crews may not be receiving adequate caloric intake for performing fireline tasks.

## **GENERAL COMMENTS**

- The Fire Captain established a method for reviewing inmate's medical clearance record (CDC 128-C-1) to identify preexisting medical conditions.
- The Fire Captain obtained experienced lookouts with communications to provide for the safety of the crew.
- The Fire Captain notified the ECC of the medical emergency immediately after his assessment of the inmate.
- At the direction of the Fire Captain, immediate medical attention was provided to the inmate. This was the direct result of crew training for heat related emergencies.



Hiking Path   
IM - Inmate  
LZ - Landing Zone