

Draft Blackhawk EMC After Action Report – May 3, 2025 Fire Overwatch Mission

Fire Name – None given by Incident Command on the Ground at the Fire

Blackhawk Ops Name = *Blackhawk Overwatch South 050325*

Location = *South of Blackhawk near the Spring Creek burn scar*

Estimated Burn Area = *100' x 200' = 0.46 acre in steep heavily forested timber*

Type of Action by Blackhawk EMC = Request for Assistance (HCFPD) for Blackhawk Coverage on lookout positions in Quadrants 2,3,4 fire spotting and description to be shared periodically with HCFPD Incident Command.

Timeline of Activity

Blackhawk Incident Command Established (Brad Brooks) by default at 14:07 on May 3, 2025 via HCFPD Phone request. Additional notification and requests came in from Purgatory Valley Volunteer Fire Department (CK Morey).

14:15 – 14:55 Elements of EMC's Quadrants 2,3,4 were notified by text, phone and radio and began to deploy within 10 minutes. Jim Nance Q2, Art and Wendy Jackson Q3, Marian Brooks at Q4 Base Radio Hub and Brad Brooks Q4 deployed to known lookouts in each of these quadrants. Info sharing began immediately by radio, with some supplemental texting using the new text app under development. Text and Phone contacts were made with both HCFPD and PVVFPD reporting views from Blackhawk Lookouts to South of the Ranch. No fires, no fire plumes were observed from the lookouts during this time.

14:55 – 15:45 Elements of Q 2,3,4 continued to surveille lookout points for observable fire, fire plumes or smoke to the South of the Ranch. Some repetitive checking and information exchange between Quadrant searchers continued via radio until approximately 15:55. Official release from PVVFPD came in during this time.

15:45 – 18:46 – Elements of EMC Q 2,3,4 continued to observe from lookouts and share data. Official Stand Down call received from Roy Britt (HCFPD) 18:46

After Action Summary of To Dos and Success

1. The first person first receiving a RFA from official Fire Departments **should formally** (not by default) declare Incident Command for the Blackhawk team responding. If someone with more experience in Incident Command were to show up, IC could be transferred at that time should it be deemed necessary by those involved.

2. The Fire, in this case ***remained unnamed*** by HCFPD. However, Blackhawk Incident Command should have **formally named the Blackhawk response** for use in the remainder of communications by Blackhawk responders. This was done after the incident closed.
3. With Art's permission, we deployed his excellent text platform for use during this exercise. It worked amazingly well for a texting app under development. Home run on this. We look forward to additional opportunities to test this platform under real-world conditions.
4. Having Marian on Q4 base radio worked well as an incident Communication Hub for the multiple entities and multiple comm channels. She was able to bridge all of the gaps that arose during our convergence of phone, text and radio comms traffic.
5. We received thanks from both HCFPD and PVFPD for how quickly we responded to their RFAs in this matter. We fulfilled the fire protection districts' expectations on overwatch.

I think all responders involved from the EMC were grateful that this RFA was received in a manner that literally allowed us to test out several items in our EMC response capabilities. We were the only non-fire entity that was sent an RFA in this incident. We tested:

- * Incident Command – a little rusty, but successful.
- * Response of Quadrant Search Teams. Use of Highpoint Lookouts and gear.
- * Simultaneous and asynchronous Use and Coordination of phone, text and radio input and output between 3 responding orgs. Boundary conditions for radios and texts.
- * Conditioning ourselves to respond quickly no matter the context of the call received.

In closing, we were lucky that we were asked to participate in an event not on Blackhawk Ranch, to provide a service to two FPDs, and test our human capabilities and infrastructural capacity for response to an emergency. My sincere gratitude to all BHR EMC members who responded.

Respectfully submitted 5/14/25,

Brad Brooks, Chair