



STATEMENT

USDA Forest Service • Shasta-Trinity National Forest • Public Affairs & Communications
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August 6, 2008

Media Contact: Media Desk (530) 226-2363

By
Shasta-Trinity National Forest Supervisor Sharon Heywood
Crash of contract helicopter
August 6, 2008

I would like to extend a very special heartfelt thank you to the employees of the Forest Service, Trinity County Sheriff's Department, Mercy Medical Center and staff for all their support and efforts in this very trying situation.

This is what we can confirm at this time:

- At approximately 7:45 p.m. last night, Forest Service officials were notified that a Sikorsky S-61 contract helicopter assigned to the Iron Complex on the Shasta-Trinity National Forest crashed.
- Four fire personnel were airlifted to Mercy Medical Center and arrived at approximately 9:30 p.m. Two fire personnel, one of which is the pilot of the helicopter, were air lifted to UC Davis Medical Center in Sacramento. This morning at about 8 a.m. a third individual was air lifted to UC Davis Medical Center
- **At this time:**
 - The first individual, identified as the Pilot, is located at UC Davis Medical Center in serious condition
 - A second contract firefighter is located at UC Davis Medical Center in critical condition
 - A third contract firefighter is located at UC Davis Medical Center in serious condition
 - A fourth contract firefighter remains at Mercy Medical Center Redding and is listed in serious, but stable condition.
- I ask the public to join me in our thoughts and prayers for the fire personnel, family and friends.
- We still have people unaccounted for and we are working in close cooperation with the Trinity County Sheriff's Department. The location of the incident is within the Trinity Alps Wilderness. This area is steep, remote and rugged and difficult to access.
- The helicopter went down on the north end of the Buckhorn Fire, approximately 15 miles northwest of Junction City, Calif.
- We can confirm the helicopter was shuttling fire crews.
- The helicopter is a contract helicopter registered to Carson Helicopters with offices in Grants Pass, Ore. and Perkasio, Penn.

- The National Transportation Safety Board has the lead investigative authority over the incident. From this point forward the NTSB will be the lead agency. Any information related to the circumstances of the helicopter accident will be released by the NTSB.

I'd like to thank our extended fire service family, as well as police and public service agencies and the public, your support means a lot to us, especially at this time.

We will continue to aggressively fight all fires on the forest, while working to provide for firefighter safety.

Thank you for attending today.