

# GREEN SHEET

## Colton / Loma Linda Fire Departments

### Preliminary Summary Report



### Commercial Structure Fire Three firefighters Injured when Aerial Ladder Contacts High Voltage Lines

May 25, 2014

#### Washington Incident

Master CAD Incident #14-067042

Colton Incident #14-02543

This Preliminary Summary Report is intended as an aid in accident prevention, and to provide factual information from 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.

## **SYNOPSIS**

On Saturday, May 24, 2014 at 2358 hours, Colton ME214, ME213, E211T, Battalion 403 and Loma Linda MT251 were dispatched to a structure fire at 1450 E. Washington Street in the City of Colton. The first unit on scene reported a 50' X 100' commercial structure with heavy smoke and fire showing. A defensive fire attack was initiated and fire crews had the fire knocked down within 35 minutes. After fire suppression efforts, and while crew members were loading hose onto MT251, the aerial ladder came in contact with 12kv power lines, shocking three firefighters.

## **NARRATIVE**

On May 25<sup>th</sup> 2014 at 0005 hours ME214 arrived on scene to find a 50' X 100' vacant commercial building with heavy smoke and fire showing through the roof. Due to the fire conditions, ME214 initiated a master stream operation.

Upon arrival, ME213 positioned on Washington Street, north of the fire building, and assisted ME214 in obtaining a water supply. BC403 assumed Washington Street command and declared the fire a defensive operation.

E211T arrived on scene and drove down into the complex with ME214 and started deploying 2-1/2" hand lines off ME214. The IC assigned ME214 as Division "A". ME213 and E211T were assigned to work under Division "A".

MT251 secured their own water source off of Washington Street. MT251 set up a ladder pipe operation and was assigned Division "B". The aerial was set up and deployed off of the passenger side of the apparatus.

The fire was knocked down at 0039 hours and the IC ordered the master stream and ladder pipe operations to be shut down. Division "A" transitioned to small diameter handlines for mop-up. MT251 crew was advised by the IC to start breaking down the supply line in order to open up Washington Street.

The supply hose was drained and placed at the rear of the unit to be reloaded. The Captain and Engineer on MT251 were at the rear, loading the last approximate ten feet of supply line. During this time, the truck certified firefighter assigned to MT251 was on the aerial pedestal preparing to bed the ladder. The ladder was rotated 180° clockwise, and was now sitting off the driver's side. The ladder remained at its original deployed elevation of approximately 50°, and extension of approximately 61feet. When the ladder was repositioned to the driver's side of the truck, it contacted a high voltage power line.

At 0117 hours, the IC heard what he perceived to be laughter and yelling from the area of MT251. As he looked in the direction of the commotion, he observed the Engineer lying supine with both knees flexed and feet on the ground. The Captain was pressed against the rear diamond plate of MT251. The IC noticed blue arcing between the ground and the Engineer's boots. At this point, he realized both the Captain and Engineer were sustaining electrical shock.

A "Firefighter Down" was transmitted to Comm Center at 0118 hours and two ground ambulances were requested. As the IC ran toward the individuals involved, the IC noticed the Firefighter standing on the ladder turntable frantically yelling. The firefighter was advised to stay on the turntable and not touch anything. The Engineer was able to crawl away from MT251 with the assistance of a Colton Police Officer.

The Captain collapsed to the ground and appeared to be unconscious. The IC determined that the Captain was not energized by swiping his hand across the Captain's lower extremities. The IC then dragged the Captain away from the rear of MT251. Once cleared of the ladder truck, an Engineer from E211T assisted in carrying the Captain to a treatment area. Colton Fire Department personnel initiated patient care. Incident personnel provided instruction to the Firefighter on the turntable and were able to coach him safely away from the energized vehicle.

All three personnel were transported to Arrowhead Regional Medical Center for evaluation and definitive care. The Firefighter on the turntable sustained a minor electrical shock. The Engineer sustained more serious injuries including exit wounds to his feet. The Captain sustained electrical injury to his upper & lower extremities, torso and third degree burns to his feet.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMMEDIATE CORRECTIVE ACTIONS**

- Maintain situational awareness throughout all phases of the incident.
- Train on aerial ladder operations on a regular basis.
- Adhere to all safety guidelines as directed by the aerial apparatus manufacturer.