

## Appendix IV: After Action Reports

### After Action Reports

Major fire sieges fully test the various management systems that are designed for emergency response and coordination. Agency executives take a hard look at all aspects of the operation and make adjustments as necessary. The management team responsible for each of the major fires prepares an incident-specific post-incident activity summary with findings and recommendations. In addition, there are several completed and on-going major after-action reports from various levels of government discussing operations during the California Fire Siege 2007. This list describes some of these reports, and is not intended to be all-inclusive.

### Blue Ribbon Commission Task Force

In November 2007, Governor Schwarzenegger asked the Governor's Blue Ribbon Fire Commission formed after the 2003 fire siege, to reconvene and assess what happened during the 2007 fires and recommend improvements in California's fire and emergency response system. On January 18, 2008 the 18-member independent panel of fire service professionals issued an interim report. This report titled "Blue Ribbon Commission Task Force Report" detailed more than a dozen critical recommendations to increase permanent state and local emergency services, build additional surge capacity, improve tactical capabilities, establish better coordination among governmental agencies, and promote fire-safe construction and land-use planning. Some high-priority recommendations, such as staffing, equipment and training, were incorporated into the governor's proposed 2008-2009 budget.

### Lessons Learned Center

The Wildland Fire Lessons Learned Center actively promotes a learning culture to enhance and sustain safe and effective work practices in the wildland fire community. The Center provides opportunities and resources to foster collaboration among all fire professionals, facilitates their networks, provides access to state-of-the-art learning tools, and links learning to training.

The Lessons Learned Center conducted a study of actions taken during the October fire siege and issued a report entitled "Initial Impressions Report Southern California Fires 2007: What we learned, how we worked".

Interviewees for this report noted several areas that should receive focused attention until, either through policy, training, or equipment upgrades, these problems areas are resolved. This report does not relate a complete history of the events or decisions made during Southern California's 2007 fires. It codifies the observations of a broad sampling of representatives from as many agencies and organizations as possible, who were working in a variety of roles, in several functions, on different fires. The report then highlights the themes that rose as common concerns among all of these respondents.



Smoky conditions spread throughout Southern California



*Hemet Ryan AAB  
on the morning of  
November 3, 2007  
just minutes prior to  
the start of morning  
operations.*

### *Aviation Response*

The aviation management teams of CAL FIRE and the U.S. Forest Service, Region 5, conducted a study of the aviation response during the siege. Their findings are documented in the report “Collection of Aviation Related Written Accounts”, compiled from submitted accounts written by Air Tactical Group Supervisors, Lead Plane Pilots, Bravo units, and Air Tanker Bases Southern California Fires October 2007. This report collected information from aviation management officers that will prove valuable for future management reviews of operational procedures.

### *National Response Plan*

The federal Office of Homeland Security and the Federal Emergency Management Agency have made significant changes to the National Response Plan since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the Katrina Hurricane disaster. These plans were put into action during this fire siege, and were fully tested. FEMA is preparing numerous after-action studies and reports to evaluate the effectiveness of the updates. These studies will be published and distributed by FEMA.