



**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION  
SAN LUIS OBISPO UNIT**

635 North Santa Rosa Street  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93405

**VENTURA COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT**

165 Durley Avenue  
Camarillo, CA 93010

# INVESTIGATION REPORT

**CASE NUMBER:**

17CAVNC103156

**CASE NAME:**

THOMAS

**DATE:**

December 4, 2017

**INCIDENT TYPE:**

Wildland Fire

**INCIDENT INVESTIGATORS:**

Christine SAQUI, Fire Investigator – VCFD

Aimin ALTON, Firefighter (PM) - VCFD  
Dennis BYRNES, Fire Captain – CAL FIRE  
Gregg DELAROSA, Senior Deputy – VCSO  
Jace CHAPIN, Battalion Chief – CAL FIRE  
Ryan MILLER, Firefighter – VCFD  
Steven DEAN, Fire Investigator – USFS  
Tom CRASS, Fire Captain-Specialist – CAL FIRE  
Patrick KELLEY, Fire Captain – VCFD

Alex LOMVARDIAS, Special Agent – USFS  
Brian KINSLEY, Firefighter – VCFD  
Jay SNODGRASS, Fire Captain Investigator - SBCOFD  
Jon BERGH, Fire Investigator – VCFD  
Ken RUSSELL, Fire Captain-Specialist – CAL FIRE  
Marshall HATCH, Fire Investigator – VCFD  
Shannan HARRIS, Fire Captain-Specialist – CAL FIRE

**1 – VIOLATIONS:****Penal Code § 192**

Manslaughter is the unlawful killing of a human being without malice. It is of three kinds:

(b) Involuntary—in the commission of an unlawful act, not amounting to a felony; or in the commission of a lawful act which might produce death, in an unlawful manner, or without due caution and circumspection. This subdivision shall not apply to acts committed in the driving of a vehicle.

**Penal Code § 452**

A person is guilty of unlawfully causing a fire when he recklessly sets fire to or burns or causes to be burned, any structure, forest land or property.

(a) Unlawfully causing a fire that causes great bodily injury is a felony punishable by imprisonment in the state prison for two, four or six years, or by imprisonment in the county jail for not more than one year, or by a fine, or by both such imprisonment and fine.

(b) Unlawfully causing a fire that causes an inhabited structure or inhabited property to burn is a felony punishable by imprisonment in the state prison for two, three or four years, or by imprisonment in the county jail for not more than one year, or by a fine, or by both such imprisonment and fine.

(c) Unlawfully causing a fire of a structure or forest land is a felony punishable by imprisonment in the state prison for 16 months, two or three years, or by imprisonment in the county jail for not more than six months, or by a fine, or by both such imprisonment and fine.

(d) Unlawfully causing a fire of property is a misdemeanor. For purposes of this paragraph, unlawfully causing a fire of property does not include one burning or causing to be burned his own personal property unless there is injury to another person or to another person's structure, forest land or property.



**Health & Safety Code § 13001**

Every person is guilty of a misdemeanor who, through careless or negligent action, throws or places any lighted cigarette, cigar, ashes, or other flaming or glowing substance, or any substance or thing which may cause a fire, in any place where it may directly or indirectly start a fire, or who uses or operates a welding torch, tar pot or any other device which may cause a fire, who does not clear the inflammable material surrounding the operation or take such other reasonable precautions necessary to insure against the starting and spreading of fire.

**Public Resources Code § 4421**

A person shall not set fire or cause fire to be set to any forest, brush, or other flammable material which is on any land that is not his own, or under his legal control, without the permission of the owner, lessee, or agent of the owner or lessee of the land.

**General Order 95, 31.1: Design, Construction and Maintenance**

Electrical supply and communication systems shall be of suitable design and construction for their intended use, regard being given to the conditions under which they are to be operated, and shall be maintained in a condition which will enable the furnishing of safe, proper and adequate service.

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**2 – SUMMARY:**

On Monday, December 4, 2017, at approximately 6:23 PM, a phone report of a wildland fire was called into the Ventura County Fire Department (VCFD) Fire Station 20. Fire Captain Tony SALAS took the phone call. While on the phone, Station 20 was toned out for a wildland fire in the area of 1681 Dickenson Drive. While enroute in VCFD Engine 20 (E20) SALAS and crew observed a wildland fire in Anlauf Canyon. This is in the same geographical area as the phone-in report received at VCFD Station 20 regarding a wildland fire near Thomas Aquinas College. E20 arrived on scene, confirmed the wildland fire, reported to dispatch the fire was approximately 50 acres and requested a second alarm. The fire was located in a canyon above Steckel Park. SALAS observed strong winds in the area and the fire racing down canyon toward Highway 150. E20 was unable to engage in fire suppression due to extreme fire conditions. SALAS assumed command of the fire and directed incoming resources into the fire. At approximately 7:30 PM, VCFD dispatched a reported wildland fire in the area of Koenigstein Road and Highway 150, this fire was determined by investigators to be a separate fire (*identified as the KOENIGSTEIN fire*) not associated with the THOMAS fire.

The THOMAS fire continued to burn out of control. On Tuesday, December 5, 2017, at approximately 1:00 AM, the THOMAS and KOENIGSTEIN fires merged into one and both fires were referred to as the THOMAS fire. Collectively, the THOMAS fire and the KOENIGSTEIN fire consumed 281,893 acres of mixed wildland and 1343 structures destroyed/damaged. One civilian fatality and one fire fighter fatality occurred as a result of these two fires. The fire was fully controlled on Wednesday, January 10, 2018.

The assigned fire investigation team (*IT*) determined the THOMAS fire occurred when energized power lines came into contact (phase to phase) with each other between two power poles, emitting molten aluminum particles onto the surrounding dry vegetation. The IT documented, photographed and collected sections and parts associated with the involved power lines. The power lines and equipment

1 responsible for the THOMAS fire where owned and operated by Southern California  
2 Edison (SCE).



**3 – SUSPECT:**

S-1 Southern California Edison (SCE)

Corporate Headquarters

9200 Oakdale Avenue, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor

Los Angeles, CA 91311

Phone: (888) 848-4754

Process Service Agent - SCE

Cristina LIMON

2244 Walnut Grove Avenue

Rosemead, CA 91770

Phone: (888) 848-4754

Christina.Limon@sce.com

**4 – VICTIMS & WITNESSES:****VICTIMS:**

V-1 Virginia PASOLA

Civilian

7777 Wheeler Canyon Road

Santa Paula, CA 93001

DOB: 02/18/1947

*For further information pertaining to PASOLA contact Ventura County Medical Examiner's Office at (805) 641-4400 (reference report #1501-17).*

V-2 Cory IVERSON

Fire Apparatus Engineer – CAL FIRE

2249 Jamacha Road

El Cajon, CA 92019

DOB: 01/05/1985

*For further information pertaining to IVERSON contact Ventura County Medical Examiner's Office at (805) 641-4400 (reference report #1539-17).*

**Other Victims:**

For a complete list of properties which sustained damage or burned structures during the THOMAS and/or KOENINGSTEIN fires (see attachment #4). This list may or may not include damaged land and other miscellaneous burned properties.

**WITNESSES:**

W-1 David DOLLAR

16840 Anlauf Road

Santa Paula, CA 93060

Home: (805) 229-0077

Cell: (805) 750-6490

*Fire originated on his property, can testify to seeing fire surrounding his property, and sustained damage to vegetation, barn and other property. DOLLAR recalled the power was interrupted approximately 15 minutes prior to receiving a phone call from his son Chris DOLLAR, notifying him of the fire. DOLLAR was on his property with two employees from Carbon California approximately two hours prior to the fire. Also DOLLAR'S vehicle was inspected by the investigation team (see attachment #5).*

W-2 Chris DOLLAR

238 Waterford Road

Fillmore, CA 93015

Phone: (805) 216-9067

*C. DOLLAR can testify to receiving a phone call from Juan GAMEZ Jr. and telling C. DOLLAR there was a fire behind his parents' house, Chris was also present when DOLLAR was interviewed (see attachment #5).*

W-3 Matt DOLLAR

1958 Grand Avenue

Fillmore, CA 93015

Phone: (805) 524-7263

*M. DOLLAR is the son of DOLLAR and can testify to being present when DOLLAR was interviewed (see attachment #5).*



1 W-4 Dori Thompson CLARKE

2 Owner of THOMPCO

3 899 Mission Rock Road

4 Santa Paula, CA 93060

5 Office: (805) 933-8048

6 *Can testify to sending three of her employees up to the Timber Oil Lease*

7 *(Carbon California) the day the THOMAS fire occurred. CLARKE provided*

8 *documentation of what her employees did and time they arrived and left on the*

9 *oil lease (see attachment #6).*

11 W-5 Alberto NUNEZ

12 THOMPCO Employee

13 899 Mission Rock Road

14 Santa Paula, CA 93060

15 Office: (805) 933-8048

16 *NUNEZ can testify to working for THOMPCO and was with Jesus VALENZUELA*

17 *and John TAIT working at the Timber Oil Lease (Carbon California) the day of*

18 *the fire and arrived at the lease at approximately 7:30 AM, and left at*

19 *approximately 3:00 PM (see attachment #6).*

21 W-6 John TAIT

22 THOMPCO Employee

23 899 Mission Rock Road

24 Santa Paula, CA 93060

25 Office: (805) 933-8048

26 *TAIT can testify to working for THOMPCO and was with Jesus VALENZUELA*

27 *and NUNEZ working at the Timber Oil Lease (Carbon California) the day of the*

28 *fire and arrived at the lease at approximately 7:30 AM, and left at approximately*

29 *3:00 PM (see attachment #6).*

W- 7 Jesus VALENZUELA

THOMPCO Employee

1032 South H Street

Oxnard, CA 93030

Phone: (805) 727-0036

*VALENZUELA was working for THOMPCO and was with NUNEZ and TAIT working at the Timber Oil Lease (Carbon California) the day of the fire.*

*VALENZUELA arrived at the lease at approximately 7:30 AM, and left at approximately 3:00 PM. The THOMPCO vehicle VALENZUELA was utilizing the day of the THOMAS fire, was inspected by the investigation team (see attachment #6).*

W-8 Richard RUDMAN

1046 Corte La Brisa

Santa Paula, CA 93060

Phone: (213) 447-5392

*Can testify to maintaining the radio towers in Anlauf Canyon. RUDMAN was on the property the afternoon prior to the fire starting. RUDMAN experienced strong winds at the radio tower prior to the start of the THOMAS fire. RUDMAN provided the DATA logs of power outages the day of the THOMAS fire to the IT (see attachment #7).*

1 W-9 Peter RIOUX

2 300 E. Virginia Terrace

3 Santa Paula, CA 93060

4 Phone: (805) 421-3800

5 *Can testify to being the Operation Supervisor at Saint Thomas Aquinas College,*  
6 *and placed the fire within DOLLAR'S property in a canyon above his house*  
7 *before 6:30 PM. RIOUX called VCFD Fire Station 20 prior to them being*  
8 *dispatched by Ventura County Fire Communication Center and advised them of*  
9 *the fire. RIOUX took pictures of the fire and provided them to the IT (see*  
10 *attachment #8).*

12 W-10 Brian DICKENSON

13 1681 Dickenson Drive

14 Santa Paula, CA 93060

15 Phone: (805) 443-1796

16 *Can testify to calling 911 reporting the THOMAS fire. DICKENSON lives in Santa*  
17 *Paula and saw the fire in the area of Anlauf Canyon. DICKENSON is one of the*  
18 *first 911 reporting parties for the THOMAS fire (see attachment #49).*

20 W-11 Tony SALAS

21 165 Durley Avenue

22 Camarillo, CA 93010

23 Phone: (805) 420-8335

24 *SALAS can testify to receiving a phone call from Peter RIOUX reporting the fire*  
25 *in the area of Anlauf Canyon. SALAS was the Fire Captain on the first arriving*  
26 *VCFD Fire Engine 20, SALAS was the first Incident Commander and saw the fire*  
27 *coming from DOLLAR'S property (see attachment #9).*

1 W-12 Steve SWINDLE

2 165 Durley Avenue

3 Camarillo, CA 93010

4 Phone: (805) 389-9710

5 *SWINDLE can testify to being the Fire Apparatus Engineer on the first arriving*  
6 *VCFD Engine 20 (see attachment #9).*

8 W-13 Steve BUCKLES

9 165 Durley Avenue

10 Camarillo, CA 93010

11 Phone: (805) 341-8298

12 *BUCKLES can testify to being the Firefighter on first arriving VCFD Engine 20*  
13 *(see attachment #9).*

15 W-14 Juan GAMEZ Sr.

16 8743 North Ojai Road

17 Santa Paula, CA 93060

18 *Can testify to seeing the fire in Anlauf Canyon and taking pictures of the fire.*

19 *GAMEZ sent a multimedia message service image to his son Juan GAMEZ Jr.*  
20 *(see attachment #10).*

22 W-15 Juan GAMEZ Jr.

23 137 South Seventh Street

24 Santa Paula, CA 93060

25 *GAMEZ Jr. can testify to receiving a phone text message picture from his father*  
26 *GAMEZ of a fire near DOLLAR'S house. GAMEZ Jr. called C. DOLLAR and*  
27 *advised him there was a fire near his parents' house (see attachment #10).*



1 W-16 Robert FROST

2 12390 W. Telegraph Road

3 Santa Paula, CA 93060

4 Home: (805) 933-0930

5 Cell: (805) 377-2231

6 *Can testify to leasing the property from DOLLAR for his cattle. FROST received*  
7 *a phone call from GAMEZ stating there was a fire on DOLLAR'S property (see*  
8 *attachment #11).*

9

10 W-17 Mel LOVO

11 Fire Captain VCFD

12 165 Durley Avenue

13 Camarillo, CA 93010

14 Phone: (805) 603-0656

15 *LOVO can testify to being on Copter 8, and being the first arriving helicopter.*

16 *LOVO took video upon arrival (see attachment #12).*

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18 W-18 Ken WILLIAMS

19 Ventura County Sheriff's Department

20 375 Durley Avenue, Suite A

21 Camarillo, CA 93010

22 Phone (805) 388-4212

23 *WILLIAMS can testify to being the Pilot on Copter 8 with Fire Captain LOVO*  
24 *(see attachment #12).*

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1 W-19 Randy GILBERT

2 Firefighter, VCFD

3 165 Durley Avenue

4 Camarillo, CA 93010

5 Phone: (805) 388-4212

6 *GILBERT can testify to being on the second arriving helicopter (Copter 7).*

8 W-20 Leila THAYER

9 14997 Ojai Road

10 Santa Paula, CA 93060

11 Phone: (805) 651-8524

12 *Can testify to calling 911 and seeing the fire from Highway 150 near Steckel*  
13 *Park (see attachment #13).*

15 W-21 Tammy GARCIA

16 1804 Soledad Road

17 Santa Clarita, CA 91387

18 Cell: (805) 758-5147

19 *Can testify to driving on Highway 150 at approximately 6:30 PM, on Monday,*  
20 *December 4, 2017. GARCIA saw the fire on the east side of Highway 150 and*  
21 *took photos and videos (see attachment #13).*

23 W-22 Lindsey MOORE

24 PSC 561, Box 5007

25 FPHAP 96310-0051

26 (MOORE lives overseas)

27 *Can testify to driving on Highway 150 with her mother GARCIA at approximately*  
28 *6:30 PM, on Monday, December 4, 2017. MOORE saw the fire on the east side*  
29 *of Highway 150 (see attachment #13).*

1 W-23 Martin HAGGARD

2 22255 Needles Street

3 Chatsworth, CA 91311

4 Phone: (818) 703-3473

5 *Can testify to calling 911 and seeing the fire from Thomas Aquinas College*

6 *(see attachment #13).*

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8 W-24 Rose LEMON

9 24647 State Highway 20

10 Nevada City, CA 95959

11 Phone: (530) 388-8317

12 *Can testify to calling 911, smelling smoke and seeing the fire from Steckel Park*

13 *(see attachment #13).*

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15 W-25 Jeanette RICHARD

16 Phone: (805) 666-0819

17 *Can testify to calling 911 and seeing a red glow from Thomas Aquinas College*

18 *(see attachment #13).*

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20 W-26 Bill ALLEN

21 148 Eliot Street

22 Santa Paula, CA 93060

23 Phone: (805) 207-2072

24 *Can testify to calling 911 and seeing the fire from Highway 126*

25 *(see attachment #13).*

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1 W-27 Jorge MONZADA

2 2531 Seahorse Avenue

3 Ventura, CA 93001

4 Phone: (805) 701-9908

5 *Can testify to receiving seven photos and forwarding the photos to the THOMAS*  
6 *IT (see attachment #14).*

8 W-28 Alexandra PRICE

9 12606 Koenigstein Road

10 Santa Paula, CA 93060

11 Phone: (805) 901-2762

12 *Can testify to receiving a phone call from her friend Susan at approximately 6:30*  
13 *PM, who told her about the THOMAS fire. Susan was aware of the fire from a*  
14 *phone fire alert app. PRICE and her husband drove to an advantage point and*  
15 *described the fire to be on DOLLAR'S property (see attachment #15).*

17 W-29 Ray PRICE

18 12606 Koenigstein Road

19 Santa Paula, CA 93060

20 Phone: (805) 207-5924

21 *Can testify to being with his wife, A. PRICE, during the start of the THOMAS fire*  
22 *on DOLLAR'S property (see attachment #15).*





1 W-30 Tiarzha TAYLOR

2 12695 Koenigstein Road

3 Santa Paula, CA 93060

4 DOB: 08/13/1967

5 CDL: A1286200

6 Phone: (310) 339-5417

7 *Can testify to seeing and taking photographs of the THOMAS fire*  
8 *(see attachment #16).*

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10 W-31 Earl BROCK

11 12598 Koenigstein Road

12 Santa Paula, CA 93060

13 DOB: 03/01/1960

14 CDL: N6507890

15 Phone: (805) 444-5057

16 *Can testify to observing the THOMAS fire to the south and taking photos of the*  
17 *fire (see attachment #17).*

18

19 W-32 Michael MCLEAN

20 10000 Santa Paula Ojai Road

21 Santa Paula, CA 93060

22 Phone: (805) 231-7613

23 *Can testify to being the President of Saint Thomas Aquinas College, resides on*  
24 *the property and was there at the time of the fire. MCLEAN received text*  
25 *messages from Robert GOYETTE and RIOUX stating there was a fire one-half*  
26 *mile south and east of the college (see attachment #18).*

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1 W-33 Clark TULBERG

2 931 Greenwood Drive

3 Santa Paula, CA 93060

4 *Can testify to being the Facilities Manager for Saint Thomas Aquinas College,*  
5 *and was on the property at the time of the fire. RIOUX called TULBERG and told*  
6 *him about the fire. TULBERG showed the investigation team the photos he*  
7 *received from RIOUX of the THOMAS fire (see attachment #19).*

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9 W-34 John GOYETTE

10 393 Dana Drive

11 Santa Paula, CA 93060

12 Phone: (805) 208-2991

13 *Can testify to being employed at Saint Thomas Aquinas College and was at the*  
14 *property at the time of the fire. His son Robert GOYETTE notified him of the fire*  
15 *at 6:27 PM (see attachment #20).*

16

17 W-35 Maria GOYETTE

18 393 Dana Drive

19 Santa Paula, CA 93060

20 Phone: (805) 208-2991

21 *Can testify to driving south on Highway 150 and seeing a large glow in the*  
22 *Mountains above Steckel Park (see attachment #20).*

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1 W-36 Robert GOYETTE

2 393 Dana Drive

3 Santa Paula, CA 93060

4 Phone: (805) 421-8771

5 *Can testify to being a student at Saint Thomas Aquinas College and was*  
6 *standing near his dormitory, looked south and saw the fire at approximately 6:27*  
7 *PM, GOYOTTE alerted his father, J. GOYETTE about the fire (see attachment*  
8 *#20).*

10 W-37 Stephen SMITH

11 5682 Pine Grove Road

12 Santa Paula, CA 93060

13 Phone: (805) 525-0758

14 *Can testify to seeing smoke and then fire coming over ridge from the direction of*  
15 *Anlauf Canyon (see attachment #21).*

17 W-38 Patricia MOREHART

18 9016 Mupu Road

19 Santa Paula, CA 93060

20 Phone: (805) 933-1531

21 *Can testify to receiving a phone call from her neighbor notifying her of the fire.*  
22 *MOREHART observed the fire coming towards her house from Anlauf*  
23 *Canyon area, called M. MOREHART telling him to return home because of the*  
24 *fire (see attachment #22).*



1 W-39 Martin MOREHART

2 9016 Mupu Road

3 Santa Paula, CA 93060

4 Phone: (805) 933-1531

5 *Can testify to leaving his house at approximately 6:20 PM, and receiving a phone*  
6 *call from P. MOREHART at approximately 6:40 PM, telling him to return because*  
7 *of a large fire (see attachment #22).*

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9 W-40 Paul HERNANDEZ

10 4556 North Ojai Road

11 Santa Paula, CA 93060

12 *HERNANDEZ can testify to seeing the fire in the hills above Steckel Park.*

13 *HERNANDEZ believed the fire was near the DOLLAR'S house and observed no*  
14 *fire in the direction of flare stack (see attachment #23).*

15  
16 W-41 Noel HERNANDEZ

17 10010 Ojai Road

18 Santa Paula, CA 93060

19 *Can testify to receiving a phone call from his son P. HERNANDEZ, notifying him*  
20 *of the fire, and seeing the fire near DOLLAR'S house (see attachment #23).*

21  
22 W-42 Nicholas BROUWER

23 2759 Seahorse Avenue

24 Ventura, CA 93001

25 Phone: (805) 654-8657

26 *BROUWER can testify to standing by his son Jason BROUWER'S gate at 8200*  
27 *Pine Grove Road, Santa Paula. BROUWER left his sons house on Monday,*  
28 *December 4, 2017, at approximately 5:15 PM, and did not see any fire (see*  
29 *attachment #24).*

1 W-43 Jason BROUWER

2 8200 Pine Grove Road

3 Santa Paula, CA 93060

4 *J. BROUWER and N. BROUWER were standing at his gate on Monday,*  
5 *December 4, 2017, at approximately 5:15 PM, and did not see any fire (see*  
6 *attachment #24).*

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8 W-44 Troy HENDERSON

9 4060 Ojai Road

10 Santa Paula, CA 93060

11 Phone: (805) 804-2599

12 *Can testify to seeing smoke and then fire from his deck with friend Char*  
13 *WARINNER, and can remember the flare stack was not lit at the time of the fire.*  
14 *HENDERSON is the first 911 reporting party for the THOMAS fire (see*  
15 *attachments #25 and #49).*

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17 W-45 Christine LAW

18 8778 Mupu Road

19 Santa Paula, CA 93060

20 Phone: (805) 727-0672

21 *LAW'S home is located at the west entrance of DOLLAR'S property. LAW can*  
22 *testify to initially observing the fire coming out of the canyon above DOLLAR'S*  
23 *house and over the ridge towards her home (see attachment #26).*

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1 W-46 Charles LAW

2 8778 Mupu Road

3 Santa Paula, CA 93060

4 Phone: (805) 727-0672

5 *LAW'S residence is located at the west entrance of DOLLAR'S property. Mr.*

6 *LAW can testify to his wife seeing the fire from their kitchen. Initially Mr. LAW*

7 *observed the fire coming out of the area around DOLLAR'S house and over the*

8 *ridge towards his home (see attachment #26).*

10 W-47 Frank SCHREINER

11 31621 Indian Oak Road

12 Acton, CA 93510

13 Phone: (805) 732-9205

14 Office: (805) 933-3200

15 *SCHREINER is the General Manager of the Ventura Ranch KOA, east of Steckel*

16 *Park. SCHREINER can testify he was not at the KOA at the time of the fire (see*

17 *attachment #27).*

19 W-48 RAMANDA (This is his full legal name)

20 7400 Pine Grove Road

21 Santa Paula, CA 93060

22 Phone: (831) 277-0062

23 *RAMANDA can testify to observing the fire when it approached the KOA*

24 *Campground. RAMANDA was told about the fire from an unknown party who*

25 *knocked on his RV door, RAMANDA was at Birch space #33 (see attachment*  
26 *#27).*

1 W-49 Terry BELL

2 9566 B Mupu Road

3 Santa Paula, CA 93060

4 Phone: (805) 797-5474

5 *BELL is an off-duty Santa Paula Fire Apparatus Engineer, BELL can testify he*  
6 *was home with his family at the time of the fire. BELL was alerted about the fire*  
7 *from a phone app. (Pulse Point), then saw the fire from his kitchen door (see*  
8 *attachment #28).*

10 W-50 Tanner CARPENTER

11 16840 Anlauf Road

12 Santa Paula, CA 93060

13 Phone: (805) 328-8265

14 *CARPENTER resides on the DOLLAR'S property. CARPENTER was not home*  
15 *at the time of the fire. CARPENTER was driving westbound on Highway 126,*  
16 *observed the fire in Mud Creek Canyon from Highway 126/ Hallock Road at*  
17 *approximately 6:53 PM (see attachment #29).*

19 W-51 Mike RIEDER

20 969 Coronado Circle

21 Santa Paula, CA 93060

22 *Can testify to seeing smoke in a canyon below the flare stack (see attachment*  
23 *#30).*

1 W-52 Mark ALVERADO

2 Fire Captain – United States Forest Service

3 613 Old Telegraph Road

4 Fillmore, CA 93015

5 Phone: (805) 968-6640

6 *Can testify to seeing the glow from the THOMAS fire from Highway 126 and*  
7 *Highway 150 (see attachment #31).*

8

9 W-53 Todd HABILSTON

10 12720 Ojai Santa Paula Road

11 Santa Paula CA, 93060

12 Phone: (303) 877-6959

13 *HABILSTON can testify to being a partner in the company (Carbon California)*  
14 *and is unaware there was a missing plastic 55-gallon barrel containing methanol.*  
15 *HABILSTON called several people within Carbon and all were unaware of where*  
16 *the missing barrel was (see attachment #32).*

17

18 W-54 Matthew ZEIER

19 Oil Lease Operator (Technician), CARBON California

20 12720 Ojai Santa Paula Road

21 Santa Paula, CA 93060

22 Phone: (805) 603-6811

23 *Can testify to being at the Timber oil lease at approximately 1:45 PM, the day of*  
24 *the fire, and leaving at approximately 3:45 PM. On ZEIER'S way down the hill,*  
25 *he saw DOLLAR, PRICE and FERNANDEZ also on their way down the hill.*  
26 *ZEIER can testify to the activities at the Carbon California Timber Oil Lease in*  
27 *Anlauf Canyon on Monday, December 4, 2017 (see attachment #32).*

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1 W-55 Michael DEAN Jr.

2 Field Operations Supervisor, Carbon California

3 12720 Ojai Santa Paula Road

4 Santa Paula, CA 93060

5 Phone: (805) 310-0528

6 *Can testify to Carbon California activities at the Timber Oil Lease/Anlauf Canyon*  
7 *on Monday, December 4, 2017, and operation of Carbon flare stack (see*  
8 *attachment #32).*

10 W-56 Scott PRICE

11 384 Sacramento Drive

12 Ventura, CA 93004

13 Phone: (805) 207-7924

14 *Can testify to being on DOLLAR'S property the day of the fire and leaving the*  
15 *property at approximately 5:00 PM. PRICE can also testify to the condition of*  
16 *the oil well units and equipment at the Timber Oil Lease Carbon California (see*  
17 *attachment #32).*

19 W-57 Curtis FERNANDEZ

20 12720 Ojai Santa Paula Road

21 Santa Paula, CA 93060

22 Phone: (805) 310-0528

23 *Can testify to being with DOLLAR and PRICE on DOLLAR'S ranch one and a*  
24 *half hours prior to the THOMAS fire (see attachment #32).*

1 W-58 Kelly BROWN

2 Well Site Manager, Carbon California

3 12720 Ojai Santa Paula Road

4 Santa Paula, CA 93060

5 Phone: (805) 207-3333

6 *Can testify to sending three workers from THOMPCO to work on pipe within the*  
7 *Timber Oil lease (Carbon California) property (see attachment #32).*

8

9 W-59 James BRADEY

10 Owner of Coastline Technologies

11 Coastline Technologies

12 PO Box 1270

13 Templeton, CA 93465

14 Phone: (805) 423-7689

15 *Can testify to not seeing the missing barrel of methanol since Monday,*  
16 *November 27, 2017 (see attachment #33).*

17

18 W-60 Daniel CLARKE

19 9605 Richard Wycoff Drive

20 Port Arthur, TX 77640

21 Cell: (805) 798-6517

22 *Can testify to the examination of the Carbon California Oil Facility (see*  
23 *attachment #34).*

24

25 W-61 Nathan PAPE

26 9605 Richard Wycoff Drive

27 Port Arthur, TX 77640

28 Phone: (310) 370-2747

29 *PAPE can testify to the examination of the Carbon California Oil Facility and how*  
30 *the facility operates (see attachment #34).*

1 W-62 Mark STEINHILBER

2 Department of Conservation Division of Oil, Gas and Geothermal Resources

3 Facilities Program Manager

4 5816 Corporate Avenue, Suite 100

5 Cypress, CA 90630-4731

6 Phone: (714) 816-7821

7 *Can testify to conducting a visual inspecting on the Timber Oil Lease (Carbon*  
8 *California), (see attachment #35).*

9

10 W-63 Bruce WEIHS

11 Department of Conservation Division of Oil, Gas and Geothermal Resources

12 Facilities Program Manager

13 1000 South Hill Road, Suite 116

14 Ventura, CA 93003

15 Phone: (805) 937-7246

16 *Can testify to speaking with SAQUI.*

17

18 W-64 Eric WEATHERBEE

19 Ventura County APCD

20 669 County Square Drive, Second Floor

21 Ventura, CA 93003

22 Phone: (805) 645-1496

23 *Can testify to providing documents pertaining to public records regarding*  
24 *Carbon California Facility (see attachment #36).*

25

26

27

28

29

30

1 W-65 Kirby ZOLULA

2 Ventura County APCD

3 669 County Square Drive, Second Floor

4 Ventura, CA 93003

5 Phone: (805) 645-1496

6 *Can testify to providing documents pertaining to public records regarding*

7 *Carbon California Facility (see attachment #36).*

9 W-66 Dan FERCY

10 Ventura County APCD

11 669 County Square Drive, Second Floor

12 Ventura, CA 93003

13 Phone: (805) 645-1496

14 *Can testify to providing documents pertaining to public records regarding*

15 *Carbon California Facility (see attachment #36).*

17 W-67 Michael F. EVANS

18 Owner, RIDGEWAY, Inc.

19 6500 Meadow Glade Drive

20 Moorpark, CA 93021

21 Phone: (805) 523-0912

22 *Can testify to Ridgeway contractors had not been to the Timber Canyon Oil*

23 *Lease since mid-November (see attachment #37).*

1 W-68 Tom HUNTER

2 COMSAT Teleport

3 7676 Pinegrove Road

4 Santa Paula, CA 93060

5 Phone: (805) 207-3333

6 *HUNTER can testify to being employed by COMSAT, and providing electronic*  
7 *copies of teleports that recorded two separate power events. The data was*  
8 *provided to the IT (see attachment #38).*

9

10 W-69 Guy WHITE

11 Director, Teleport Engineering & Operation

12 2120 River Road

13 Southbury, CT 06488

14 Phone: (203) 788-8825

15 *Can testify to overall COMSAT operations and engineering including commercial*  
16 *power supply. WHITE showed the IT and explained the power event that was*  
17 *recorded on Monday, December 4, 2017, at approximately 6:17 PM (see*  
18 *attachment #38).*

19

20 W-70 Dean BERN

21 COMSAT Senior Electronics Technician

22 7676 Pinegrove Road

23 Santa Paula, CA 93060

24 Phone: (805) 207-3333

25 *Can testify to power loss, logging the event, providing detailed reports to USFS*  
26 *Alex LOMVARDIAS and seeing fire approaching COMSAT Teleport (see*  
27 *attachment #38).*

28

29

30

1 W-71 Howard WISNIEWSKI

2 COMSAT Station Engineer

3 7676 Pinegrove Road

4 Santa Paula, CA 93060

5 Phone: (805) 207-3333

6 *Can testify how COMSAT logging systems works related to COMSAT.*

7 *The Power interruption and power loss electronic documentation was provided to*  
8 *the IT (see attachment #38).*

9  
10 W-72 Paul PIMENTEL

11 Southern California Edison Representative

12 P.O. Box 900

13 Rosemead, CA 91770

14 Office: (626) 302-5830

15 Cell: (626) 695- 4705

16 *PIMENTEL was in the GOA when the first span of power lines was taken down*  
17 *by Southern California Edison (SCE) employees.*

18  
19 W- 73 Julie OLIN

20 Southern California Edison Representative

21 P.O. Box 900

22 Rosemead, CA 91770

23 Phone: (626) 569-2573

24 Cell: (626) 623-8549

25 *OLIN was in the GOA when spans of power lines were taken down by SCE*  
26 *employees (see attachment #39).*

1 W-74 Joshua Edward HUNTER

2 Southern California Edison Employee

3 5007 ¾ Hayter Avenue

4 10/11/1994

5 DL: F3295136

7 W-75 Rick MCCOLLUM

8 Southern California Edison Representative

9 P.O. Box 900

10 Rosemead, CA 91770

11 Cell: (626) 233-6978

12 *MCCOLLUM was in the GOA when the second spans of power lines were taken*  
13 *down by SCE employees (see attachment #40).*

15 W-76 Koko TOMASSIAN

16 Utilities Engineer

17 California Public Utilities Commission

18 320 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 500

19 Los Angeles, CA 90013

20 Office: (213) 576-7099

21 *Can testify to inspecting SCE power equipment.*

23 W-77 Ryan ISHIKAWA

24 Utilities Engineer

25 California Public Utilities Commission

26 320 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 500

27 Los Angeles, CA 90013

28 Office: (213) 576-7099

29 *Can testify to inspecting SCE power equipment.*

1 W-78 Christine SAQUI  
2 Fire Investigator – VCFD  
3 165 Durley Avenue  
4 Camarillo, CA 93010  
5 Phone: (805) 389-9710  
6 *Can testify to being the lead fire investigator.*  
7

8 W-79 Aimin ALTON  
9 Firefighter – VCFD  
10 165 Durley Avenue  
11 Camarillo, CA 93010  
12 Phone: (805) 389-9710  
13 *Can testify to assisting with the fire investigation, data collection and analysis.*  
14

15 W-80 Gregg DELAROSA  
16 Deputy – VCSO  
17 800 South Victoria Avenue  
18 Ventura, CA 93009  
19 Phone: (805) 654-2890  
20 *Can testify to assisting with the fire investigation.*  
21

22 W-81 Jace CHAPIN  
23 Battalion Chief – CAL FIRE  
24 1234 East Shaw Avenue  
25 Fresno, CA 93710  
26 Phone: (559) 243-4118  
27 *Can testify to assisting with the fire investigation.*  
28  
29  
30



1 W-82 Ryan MILLER  
2 Fire Investigator – VCFD  
3 165 Durley Avenue  
4 Camarillo, CA 93010  
5 Phone: (805) 389-9710  
6 *Can testify to assisting with the fire investigation.*

7

8 W-83 Steven DEAN  
9 Fire Investigator – US Forest Service  
10 406 South Mildred Avenue  
11 King City, CA 93930  
12 Phone: (831) 385-5434  
13 *Can testify to assisting with the fire investigation.*

14

15 W-84 Tom CRASS  
16 Fire Captain-Specialist – CAL FIRE  
17 1968 South Lovers Lane  
18 Visalia, CA 93292  
19 Phone: (559) 732-5954  
20 *Can testify to assisting with the fire investigation.*

21

22 W-85 Alex LOMVARDIAS  
23 Fire Investigator – US Forest Service  
24 1616 North Carlotti Drive  
25 Santa Maria, CA 93454  
26 Phone: (805) 925-9538 Ext. 228  
27 *Can testify to assisting with the fire investigation.*

28

29

30

1 W-86 Brian KINSLEY

2 Fire Fighter – VCFD

3 165 Durley Avenue

4 Camarillo, CA 93010

5 Phone: (805) 389-9710

6 *Can testify to assisting with the fire investigation.*

7

8 W-87 Jay SNODGRASS

9 Fire Captain Investigator – SBCOFD

10 4410 Cathedral Oaks Road

11 Santa Barbara, CA 93110

12 Phone: (805) 681-5500

13 *Can testify to assisting with the fire investigation and coordinated the origin and*  
14 *cause investigation. SNODGRASS wrote the origin and cause (O&C) report*  
15 *(see attachment #2).*

16

17 W-88 Jon BERGH

18 Fire Investigator – VCFD

19 165 Durley Avenue

20 Camarillo, CA 93010

21 Phone: (805) 389-9710

22 *Can testify to assisting with the fire investigation.*

23

24 W-89 Kenneth RUSSELL

25 Fire Captain-Specialist – CAL FIRE

26 5366 Highway 49 North

27 Mariposa, CA 95338

28 Office: (209) 966-3622

29 *Can testify to assisting with the fire investigation.*

30

1 W-90 Marshall HATCH

2 Fire Investigator – VCFD

3 165 Durley Avenue

4 Camarillo, CA 93010

5 Phone: (805) 389-9710

6 *Can testify to assisting with the fire investigation.*

7

8 W-91 Shannan HARRIS

9 Fire Captain-Specialist – CAL FIRE

10 210 South Academy Avenue

11 Sanger, CA 93657

12 Office: (559) 493-4300

13 *Can testify to assisting with the fire investigation.*

14

15 W-92 Patrick KELLY

16 Fire Captain – VCFD

17 165 Durley Avenue

18 Camarillo, CA 93010

19 Phone: (805) 389-9710

20 *Can testify to assisting with the fire investigation.*

21

22 W-93 Eric WATKINS

23 Assistant Chief – CAL FIRE

24 1234 East Shaw Avenue

25 Fresno, CA 93710

26 Phone: (559) 243-4118

27 *Can testify to transporting evidence from the THOMAS fire to Fresno, and being*  
28 *the liaison between the investigation team and Southern California Edison.*

29

30



1 W-94 Dennis BYRNES

2 Fire Captain – CAL FIRE

3 635 North Santa Rosa Street

4 San Luis Obispo, CA 93405

5 Phone: (805) 543-4244

6 *Can testify to assisting with the fire investigation and scene security (see*  
7 *attachment #51).*

8

9 W-95 Patrick WALKER

10 Fire Fighter – CAL FIRE

11 635 North Santa Rosa Street

12 San Luis Obispo, CA 93405

13 Phone: (805) 543-4244

14 *Can testify to providing scene security (see attachment #51).*

15

16 W-96 Sal KUTKUT

17 KT Security Service

18 4744 Telephone Road, Suite 3

19 Ventura, CA 93003

20 Office: (805) 218-6729

21 *Can testify to providing 24 hour scene security (see attachment #51).*

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30



1 W-97 James "Jed" DEGRAFF

2 Technical Services Section

3 Senior Land Surveyor – CAL FIRE

4 1300 U Street

5 Sacramento, CA 92444

6 Office: (916) 323-1044

7 *Can testify to using LiDAR in the area identified by the IT. The LiDAR team can*  
8 *explain how LiDAR functions and interpret the data collected (see attachment*  
9 *#59).*

11 W-98 Dave KAROLY

12 Technical Services Section

13 Survey Party Chief – CAL FIRE

14 1300 U Street

15 Sacramento, CA 92444

16 Office: (916) 323-1044

17 *Can testify to using LiDAR in the area identified by the IT. The LiDAR team can*  
18 *explain how LiDAR functions and interpret the data collected (see attachment*  
19 *#59).*

21 W-99 Garrett JACKSON

22 Technical Services Section

23 Transportation Surveyor – CAL FIRE

24 1300 U Street

25 Sacramento, CA 92444

26 Office: (916) 323-1044

27 *Can testify to using LiDAR in the area identified by the IT. The LiDAR team can*  
28 *explain how LiDAR functions and interpret the data collected (see attachment*  
29 *#59).*



1 W-100 Jim NOLT

2 Electrical Engineer

3 107 Blue Canyon Way

4 Folsom, CA 95630-2003

5 Phone: (916) 988-2256

6 *NOLT assisted with the visual inspection of the Edison Power equipment within*  
7 *the THOMAS fire (see attachment #63).*



**5 – EVIDENCE:**

Evidence collection at the THOMAS fire began on Thursday, December 28, 2017, by Kenneth RUSSELL. Eight pieces of evidence (*E-1 thru E-8*) were collected on Thursday, December 28, 2017. A property receipt and chain of custody log was completed by the IT and SCE (Julie OLIN) for evidence (*see attachment #39*).

On Friday, January 5, 2018, the IT arrived at an upper area above the fire origin area to continue the investigation and collected evidence (*E-9 thru E-13*). A property receipt and chain of custody log was completed by the IT and SCE (Rick MCCOLLUM) for evidence (*see attachment #40*).

The evidence collected on Thursday, December 28, 2017, and on Friday, January 5, 2018, was tagged by both SCE and the IT with independent tracking tags and tracking numbers. All evidence (*E-1 thru E-13*) was secured and transported in a locked/unmarked CAL FIRE vehicle by Eric WATKINS. A chain of custody was completed by the IT team and WATKINS. All evidence collected on the THOMAS fire was transferred to the CAL FIRE evidence locker at Southern Region Headquarters, 1234 East Shaw Avenue, Fresno, California 93710. Evidence (*E-1 thru E-8*) was placed in the evidence locker on Tuesday, January 2, 2018, (*see attachment #41*). Evidence (*E-9 thru E-13*) was placed into the evidence locker on Saturday, January 6, 2018, (*see attachment #42*).

**PHYSICAL EVIDENCE**

Item #1 – (*E-1*) Section of #4 ACSR powerline spanning from Pole #1025341E, #1202085E, #3002114E, by rectifier. Section was not in contact with the ground in the Specific Origin Area (SOA). Section was from the center phase and marked with WHITE tape and tracking tags. Wire was collected by RUSSELL, logged, and property receipt given to SCE OLIN.



1 Item #2 – (E-2) Section of #4 ACSR powerline spanning from Pole #1025341E,  
2 #1202085E, #3002114E, by rectifier. Section was not in contact with the ground in  
3 the SOA. Section was from the west phase and marked with RED tape. Wire was  
4 collected by RUSSELL, logged, and property receipt given to SCE OLIN.

5  
6 Item #3 – (E-3) Section of #4 ACSR powerline spanning from Pole #1025341E,  
7 #1202085E, #3002114E, by rectifier. Section was not in contact with the ground in  
8 the SOA. Section was from the east phase and marked with BLUE tape. Wire was  
9 collected by RUSSELL, logged, and property receipt given to SCE OLIN.

10  
11 Item #4 – (E-4) Section of #4 ACSR powerline spanning from Pole #1025341E,  
12 #1023542E. Section was not in contact with the ground. Section was from the  
13 center phase and marked with WHITE tape and tracking tags. Wire was collected  
14 by RUSSELL, logged, and property receipt given to SCE OLIN.

15  
16 Item #5 – (E-5) Section of #4 ACSR powerline spanning from Pole #1025341E,  
17 #1023542E. Section was not in contact with the ground. Section was from the east  
18 phase and marked with BLUE tape and tracking tags. Wire was collected by  
19 RUSSELL, logged, and property receipt given to SCE OLIN.

20  
21 Item #6 – (E-6) Section of #4 ACSR powerline spanning from Pole #1025340E,  
22 #1023541E. Section was not in contact with the ground. Section was from the west  
23 phase and marked with RED tape and tracking tags. Wire was collected by  
24 RUSSELL, logged, and property receipt given to SCE OLIN.

25  
26 Item #7 – (E-7) End of jumper wire from with Item #4 associated with Pole  
27 #1025341E. Collected by RUSSELL, logged, and a property receipt given to SCE  
28 OLIN.





1 Item #8 – (E-8) Eight parallel groove connectors possibly associated with Item #6.  
2 Parts relating to E-8 were recovered by the IT from SCE employees after realizing  
3 the items had been removed without authorization from the IT, in violation of the  
4 MOU (*see attachment #54*). Collected by RUSSELL, logged, and a property receipt  
5 given to SCE OLIN.

6  
7 Item #9 – (E-9) Section of #4 ACSR powerline spanning from Pole #1041915E,  
8 #1041913E. Section was in contact with the ground. Section was from the south  
9 phase and marked with RED tape and tracking tags. E-9 was approximately 300  
10 feet long. Wire was collected by BYRNES, logged, and property receipt given to  
11 SCE MCCOLLUM.

12  
13 Item #10 – (E-10) Section of #4 ACSR powerline spanning from Pole #1041915E,  
14 #1041913E. Section was not in contact with the ground. Section was from the south  
15 phase and marked with RED tape and tracking tags. E-10 was approximately 10  
16 feet long. Wire was collected by BYRNES, logged, and property receipt given to  
17 SCE MCCOLLUM.

18  
19 Item #11 – (E-11) Section of #4 ACSR powerline spanning from Pole #1041915E,  
20 #1041913E. Section was in contact with the ground. Section was from the center  
21 phase and marked with WHITE tape and tracking tags. E-11 was approximately  
22 290 feet long. Wire was collected by BYRNES, logged, and property receipt given  
23 to SCE MCCOLLUM.

24  
25 Item #12 – (E-12) Section of #4 ACSR powerline spanning from Pole #1041915E,  
26 #1041913E. Section was not in contact with the ground. Section was from the  
27 center phase and marked with WHITE tape and tracking tags. E-10 was  
28 approximately 10 feet long. Wire was collected by BYRNES, logged, and property  
29 receipt given to SCE MCCOLLUM.

30



1 Item #13 – (E-13) Section of #4 ACSR powerline spanning from Pole #1041915E,  
2 #1041913E. Section was not in contact with the ground. Section was from the north  
3 phase and marked with BLUE tape and tracking tags. E-13 was approximately 300  
4 feet long. Wire was collected by BYRNES, logged, and property receipt given to  
5 SCE MCCOLLUM.

6  
7 PHOTOGRAPHS and VIDEOS (*Civilians and Fire Emergency Personnel*)

8  
9 Chris DOLLAR Video (*see attachment #5*)

10 Peter RIOUX Photos (*see attachment #6*)

11 Richard RUDMAN Photos (*see attachment #7*)

12 Juan GAMEZ Sr. Photos (*see attachment #10*)

13 Mel LOVO Photos and Videos (*see attachment #12*)

14 Tammy GARCIA Photos and Videos (*see attachment #13*)

15 Jorge MONZADA Photos (*see attachment #14*)

16 Tiarzha TAYLOR Photos (*see attachment #16*)

17 Earl BROCK Photos (*see attachment #17*)

18 Troy HERNDERSON Photos (*see attachment #25*)

19  
20 All audio recordings associated with the THOMAS fire investigation (*see attachment*  
21 *#89*).

22  
23 WRITTEN WITNESS STATMENT (*Civilians*)

24  
25 Earl BROCK (*see attachment #17*)

26 Matthew ZEIER (*see attachment #32*)

1 PHOTOGRAPHS and VIDEOS (*Investigation Team*)

3 HATCH Photos and Video's (*see attachment #32 and #90*)

4 DELAROSA Photos and Video's (*see attachment #91*)

5 KINSLEY Photos (*see attachment 92*)

6 KELLY Photos and Video's (*see attachment #32 and #93*)

7 SAQUI Photos and Video's (*see attachment #35 and #94*)

8 ALTON Photos and Video's (*see attachment #95*)

9 CHAPIN Photos (*see attachment #96*)

10 BERGH Photos (*see attachment #97*)

11 RUSSELL Photos (*see attachment #98*)

12 HARRIS Photos (*see attachment #99*)

13 SNODGRASS Photos and Videos (*see attachment #100*)



**6 – CONDITIONS:**

The origin of the THOMAS fire was near the address of 16840 Anlauf Canyon Road, Santa Paula, California 93060. The origin was approximately one half mile back in the canyon on a cattle ranch. The origin was on a southwest slope Lat/Long: (N 34 25.516/W 119 03.289, elevation 1,766 feet). The origin was near the top of a small ridge top. The mouth of the canyon ends at Highway 150. The vegetation at the origin was a mixture of grass and brush. The forecasted weather for Ventura County on Monday, December 4, 2017, predicted extreme fire danger and potentially the strongest, longest duration Santa Ana wind event of the season. A red flag warning was in effect with anticipated wind gusts of up to 80 miles per hour.

Weather information for Monday, December 4, 2017, was obtained from three different remote automated weather station (RAWS) located near the communities of Piru, El Rio and Ojai in the County of Ventura, California. The Piru RAWS is approximately 14 miles east of the THOMAS fire origin at an elevation of 636 feet. The El Rio RAWS is approximately 12 miles south of the THOMAS fire origin at an elevation of 131 feet. The Ojai RAWS is approximately 10 miles northeast of the THOMAS fire origin at an elevation of 774 feet.

All three RAWS record weather hourly. The start time of the THOMAS fire was at approximately 6:20 PM. Additionally, a lightning map was obtained with no recorded lightning activity from Friday, December 1, 2017, through the start of the THOMAS fire (*see attachment #43 through #45*).

## 1 Piru RAWS

3 Date: Monday, December 4, 2017

4 Time: 6:00 PM

5 Temperature: 59 degrees Fahrenheit

6 Dew Point: 8 degrees Fahrenheit

7 Relative Humidity: 13 percent

8 Wind Speed: 17 to 27 miles per hour

9 Wind Direction: From the northeast

10 Elevation 636 feet

11 Latitude/Longitude 34.40426 / -118.80991

## 13 El Rio RAWS

15 Date: Monday, December 4, 2017

16 Time: 6:00 PM

17 Temperature: 62 degrees Fahrenheit

18 Dew Point: 7 degrees Fahrenheit

19 Relative Humidity: 11 percent

20 Wind Speed: 17 to 30 miles per hour

21 Wind Direction: From the northeast

22 Elevation 131 feet

23 Latitude/Longitude 34.25238 / -119.14318

Ojai RAWS

Date: Monday, December 4, 2017

Time: 6:00 PM

Temperature: 59 degrees Fahrenheit

Dew Point: 3 degrees Fahrenheit

Relative Humidity: 10 percent

Wind Speed: 4 to 9 miles per hour

Wind Direction: From the southeast

Elevation 774 feet

Latitude/Longitude 34.44804 / -119.23131

**7 – EQUIPMENT:**

The equipment associated with the cause of the THOMAS fire is owned and operated by Southern California Edison (SCE). The fire originated within the GOA established by the THOMAS fire IT. Power lines were determined to be the cause of the THOMAS fire. The power lines were inspected between several poles (see *attachment #46*). Within the GOA, the IT observed several areas where SCE equipment failed. The power lines were inspected within the GOA and determined by the IT to have had phase to phase contact on several spans of power lines.

Data collected from COMSAT showed a power interruption associated with SCE equipment on Monday, December 4, 2017, at approximately 6:17 PM. COMSAT data was corroborated by several pieces of video imagery obtained by the IT throughout the course of the THOMAS fire investigation (see *attachment #3 and #38*).



**8 – PROPERTY:**

The GOA of the THOMAS fire is located on property identified by Ventura County Assessor Parcel Numbers (APN). The GOA encompasses two different parcels, APN 400 090 025 and 400 060 065 (*see attachment #47*).

The GOA is on private property located at 16840 Anlauf Canyon Road, Santa Paula, California 93060. The area within the identified APN numbers has several easement rights on an unmaintained paved road running through DOLLAR'S property. There are three ways to access DOLLAR'S property, through Anlauf Canyon Road, SENECA properties and up through Timber Canyon Road. All areas identified to access DOLLAR'S property is controlled by locked gates and barbed wire fences.

The Ventura County Assessor's Office lists the properties as 240 acres and 133.77 acre parcels. The property is owned by David and Susan DOLLAR. The property owner's address is recorded as 16840 Anlauf Canyon Road, Santa Paula, California 93060.

The THOMAS fire burned downslope in alignment with the wind threatening the cities of Santa Paula, Ventura and Ojai. The general area around the THOMAS fire is urban interface surrounded by mixed wildland.



**9 – NARRATIVE:**

On Monday, December 4, 2017, at approximately 6:25 PM, I was dispatched as a Wildland Fire Investigator by the Ventura County Fire Department (VCFD) Fire Communications Center (FCC) to a wildland fire (*later identified as the THOMAS fire*) located at 10000 Santa Paula Ojai Road, Santa Paula, CA, 93060. Multiple reports from witnesses identified the fire in the hills northeast of Santa Paula. VCFD Engine 20, located in Upper Ojai, informed FCC they received phone calls from locals of a brush fire near the college and attached themselves to the original dispatch.

FCC originally dispatched units to 1681 Dickenson Drive, Santa Paula, CA. This was the address of an initial reporting party. While responding to the incident, FCC dispatched units to 16840 Anlauf Canyon Road. FCC advised responding units that occupants at the residence reported their home was threatened by flames, later this location was identified as David DOLLAR'S residence (*see attachment #48 through #50*).

I arrived at the Incident Command Post (ICP) located at Mill Park, 736 Santa Paula Ojai Road, at approximately 7:24 PM. I observed the fire growing quickly and spotting across Santa Paula Ojai Road (Highway 150). The incident required multiple fire crews from neighboring cities and county fire departments. Ventura County Sheriff's Office (VCSO) deputies, Santa Paula Police officers, and California Highway Patrol officers were also in the area assigned to mandatory evacuations. No emergency personnel were able to access 16840 Anlauf Canyon Road due to fire conditions.

Numerous residences in Anlauf Canyon, Ojai Road, and Campgrounds of America (KOA) at Steckel Park required rescue or assistance from emergency crews and were under mandatory evacuation. CHP closed Santa Paula Ojai Road/Highway 150 to any traffic except emergency personnel and evacuees exiting.

A separate fire was reported on Koenigstein Road at approximately 7:30 PM, located approximately 3.5 miles northwest of the THOMAS fire. Because of the

1 prevailing wind direction, location, and reports from fire crews, it was determined this  
2 fire was unrelated to the THOMAS fire. This fire was later identified by investigators  
3 as the KOENIGSTEIN fire (*see report 17CAVNC103338*).

4 I contacted FCC requesting the first reporting parties information, I obtained  
5 Brian DICKENSON'S contact information whom I contacted at approximately 8:15  
6 PM. DICKENSON was among the first reporting parties to the THOMAS fire.  
7 DICKENSON told me the following in summary: DICKENSON was taking out the  
8 trash when he observed a glow in the direction of Ferndale Ranch and Saint  
9 Thomas Aquinas College. DICKENSON was concerned because he knew there  
10 were residences in that area and called 911 at approximately 6:23 PM.  
11 DICKENSON described the fire as small and a single glow.

12 The ICP was moved to Santa Paula Fire (SPFD) Station 82, located at 114 S.  
13 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Santa Paula, at approximately 8:30 PM. While transitioning to the  
14 second ICP location, I contacted VCFD Fire Investigator Jon BERGH. BERGH and  
15 VCFD Firefighter Brian KINSLEY met me at SPFD Station 82. We attempted to  
16 access the KOENIGSTEIN fire because access to the THOMAS fire GOA presented  
17 several safety concerns which included extreme fire behavior, unfamiliar terrain and  
18 lack of visibility.

19 We observed extreme fire behavior along Highway 150. During our  
20 observations, the THOMAS fire and KOENIGSTEIN fire had not merged together.  
21 At approximately 11:45 PM, while parked off the shoulder of Highway 150, I watched  
22 a flank of the THOMAS fire burn back along a west facing slope just west of Anlauf  
23 Canyon. Several electrical power poles and tree limbs along Highway 150 broke  
24 and were blocking the road as the fire burned through the area.

25 We waited for the fire to burn through the KOENIGSTEIN neighborhood prior to  
26 entering. The fire increased in intensity and visibility was encumbered as a result of  
27 the smoke and flames. Because of this, it was not possible to enter the  
28 KOENIGSTEIN neighborhood. Since the power lines fell across the lower section of  
29 Highway 150, we drove westbound and through upper Ojai to exit. By this time, the  
30 fire had already burned through upper Ojai and crossed Highway 150.

1 On Tuesday, December 5, 2017, I arrived at the Ventura County Fairgrounds at  
2 approximately 7:00 AM. The fairground was the new location of the ICP. I met with  
3 BERGH and KINSLEY, we attended the morning briefing. I met with CAL FIRE  
4 Chief John MOODY, he informed me a fire investigation team from their department  
5 would be assigned to me. Soon after, I received a phone call from CAL FIRE  
6 Assistant Chief Eric WATKINS who informed me that two investigators, CAL FIRE  
7 Battalion Chief Jace CHAPIN and CAL FIRE Fire Captain-Specialist Shannan  
8 HARRIS would be arriving later in the day.

9 At approximately 8:30 AM, I met with Senior Deputy Gregg DELAROSA, VCSO.  
10 DELAROSA was assigned to assist me in the investigation.

11 On Tuesday, December 5, 2017, at approximately 9:00 AM, I spoke with James  
12 SNODGRASS, fire investigator for Santa Barbara County Fire Department (SBFD). I  
13 requested his assistance for the investigation. SNODGRASS informed me he would  
14 be enroute and arrive by late morning.

15 At approximately 12:30 PM, VCFD Fire Investigator Marshall HATCH,  
16 DELAROSA, and I met SNODGRASS along an east perimeter road at Saint  
17 Thomas Aquinas College. Saint Thomas Aquinas is located at 10000 Santa Paula  
18 Ojai Road. From the college, we entered through a fenced area to access Ferndale  
19 Ranch. Traveling through numerous unmarked dirt roads and locked ranch gates,  
20 we reached an access gate to Anlauf Canyon (*later determined to be part of David*  
21 *DOLLAR'S property*).

22 We reached an area within the mountains southeast of the college that  
23 contained oil well equipment. Near one of the peaks, I observed compressor  
24 equipment and a flare stack off Anlauf Canyon Road. A sign near this pad read  
25 "Timber Canyon Lease, Carbon California Company, LLC, In case of emergency  
26 call: 844-422-5737." The fire had already burned through this area.

27 The flare stack was not burning off excess gases at the time. I observed a fire  
28 next to compressor equipment, approximately two feet wide by four feet high, it was  
29 contained to an area within the compressor site and burning continually. The fire  
30 was emanating directly from a ground level grate which appeared to be a type of

1 catch basin. I did not observe any obvious smoke emanating from this area. The  
2 flames did not appear to be spreading or enlarging. I did not observe any fire  
3 damage, such as char or melting, to the surrounding equipment.

4 We continued past the compressor site and drove approximately 1500 yards  
5 east. We reached the location of a radio tower. I observed the east flank of the fire  
6 burning downhill below and east of the radio tower. The wind was blowing from the  
7 east at approximately 15 – 20 miles an hour. We drove in an easterly direction out  
8 of Anlauf Canyon Road, passed through a locked ranch gate, and through Timber  
9 Canyon Road until we reached Highway 126.

10 We returned to the ICP and met WATKINS, CHAPIN, and HARRIS. We briefed  
11 them to the particulars associated with the THOMAS fire's potential origin. We  
12 explained the terrain, surroundings, and the difficult access due to the locked ranch  
13 gates and closure at Highway 150.

14 It was decided to assign BERGH, CHAPIN, CAL FIRE Fire Captain-Specialist  
15 Kenneth RUSSELL, and VCFD Firefighter Ryan Miller to the KOENIGSTEIN fire  
16 investigation and assign HARRIS and CAL FIRE Fire Captain-Specialist Tom  
17 CRASS to the THOMAS fire investigation. I planned on meeting HARRIS, CRASS,  
18 and SNODGRASS at the 76 Gas Station located off Highway 126 and Hallock  
19 Road, in Santa Paula, the following morning at approximately 8:00 AM.

20 On Wednesday, December 6, 2017, I arrived at the ICP at approximately 7:00  
21 AM. I spoke with Amy FANZO, a California Resources Corporation (CRC)  
22 representative and oil lease contact, to inquire about CARBON CA COMPANY  
23 (CCC) and a contact person. She gave me a contact name and phone number of  
24 Todd HABLSTON. DELAROSA met me at the ICP and followed me to the 76 gas  
25 station in Santa Paula to meet with HARRIS, CRASS, and SNODGRASS.

26 At approximately 8:00 AM, it was decided that SNODGRASS would be  
27 responsible for writing the origin and cause (O&C) report for the THOMAS fire (see  
28 *attachment #2*).

29 At approximately 9:00 AM, we traveled back to Anlauf Canyon through Highway  
30 126 and Timber Canyon Road. We observed the heel of the fire near the radio

1 tower the evening prior had now burned back to the bottom of the hill. The fire was  
2 burning through the orchards of a ranch on the lower half of Timber Canyon Road.

3 Once we accessed the oil lease, we stopped at an open dirt lot, near the CLARK  
4 tank battery. I contacted HABLISTON, who explained he was located in Colorado  
5 and he would make notifications to someone local from the CCC office to meet us.  
6 HABLISTON was aware that Scott PRICE and David DOLLAR were in Anlauf  
7 Canyon the day of the fire. HABLISTON told me they were viewing existing gas  
8 pipe lines for potential purchase from DOLLAR.

9 At approximately 11:00 AM, PRICE met us at the CLARK tank battery. PRICE  
10 made access to the oil lease off Highway 150. A downed power pole across a lower  
11 oil lease access road caused PRICE to walk to our location. PRICE informed us he  
12 turned off valves at a nearby compressor site on his way to our location. The  
13 compressor site was later identified as the site where we observed fire actively  
14 burning under the grates on Tuesday, December 5, 2017.

15 While interviewing PRICE (*see attachment #32*), HATCH and KINSLEY drove  
16 through the CCC site. They drove to a compressor site and observed active fire  
17 near the equipment and took video (*see attachment #90*). This was the same  
18 compressor site that DELAROSA, SNODGRASS, and I observed on Tuesday,  
19 December 5, 2017.

20 I drove down Anlauf Canyon to a residence and met David DOLLAR and his two  
21 sons, Matt and Christopher DOLLAR. DOLLAR identified himself as the property  
22 owner and was tending to his cattle and residence. DOLLAR and his wife, Susan  
23 DOLLAR, were displaced the evening of the fire (*see attachment #5*).

24 At approximately 2:45 PM, I met with VCFD Fire Captain Tony SALAS, Engineer  
25 Steve SWINDLE, and Firefighter Steve BUCKLES. We met on Highway 150/Ojai  
26 Road, near East Sulphur Mountain Road. We stood on the shoulder of the road  
27 while SALAS described what he observed that evening. SALAS pointed towards  
28 Anlauf Canyon and DOLLAR's residence and stated as they drove south on  
29 Highway 150, he initially observed flames within Anlauf Canyon. SALAS described  
30 the fire as "well established" (*see attachment #9*).



1 HARRIS, SNODGRASS, CRASS, DELAROSA, and I established our  
2 Investigation Team (IT) for the THOMAS fire. United States Forest Service Fire  
3 Investigator (USFS) Steve DEAN, HATCH, KINSLEY, VCFD Fire Captain Patrick  
4 KELLEY and CAL FIRE Fire Captain Dennis BYRNES joined the IT.

5 Due to the totality and complexity of the THOMAS fire, the IT decided to focus  
6 our team member efforts in Origin and Cause (O&C) and Intelligence/Interview  
7 (INTEL). The IT debriefed daily information collected with regard to O&C and  
8 INTEL.

9 The THOMAS fire scene was secured by BYRNES, CAL FIRE Firefighter II  
10 Patrick WALKER and KT Security Services. They shared the responsibilities of  
11 scene security (*see attachment #51*).

12 On Thursday, December 7, 2017, the IT began reviewing the list of Reporting  
13 Parties (RP) to 911 and initiated contact (*see attachment #52*). The IT requested  
14 VCFD GIS and Mapping Services to produce aerial maps of the area of the  
15 THOMAS fire.

16 The IT interviewed multiple witnesses throughout the investigation. Some  
17 witnesses took photographs with their cell phones and were voluntarily escorted  
18 back to the area where they first saw fire. The maps were used to help witnesses  
19 identify the location where they witnessed the fire or took photographs/videos. The  
20 IT had them point to where they observed the fire, while the IT took daytime  
21 comparison photographs.

22 On Friday, December 8, 2017, I requested FCC produce a list of THOMAS fire  
23 RP's in order to organize and plainly see a list of RP's. FCC Supervisor Michael  
24 DICKERSON worked on preparing a spread sheet of the RP's. The IT obtained  
25 video footage via email from VCSO Office of Emergency Services (OES). The video  
26 footage is taken from a camera located at an OES facility on Torrey Peak (*see*  
27 *attachment #3*).

28 The IT traveled to the KOA, located east of Steckel Park and southwest of Anlauf  
29 Canyon. We spoke to Frank SCHREINER, KOA General Manager, and RAMANDA,  
30 the onsite manager. SCHREINER was not at the KOA at the time of the fire, but



1 RAMANDA was. RAMANDA took us to space #33, where he was the evening of the  
2 fire (*see attachment #27*).

3 We then met with Alexandra PRICE at the east end of KOENIGSTEIN Road  
4 (*see attachment #15*).

5 Additional interviews conducted on this day also included Richard RUDMAN (*see*  
6 *attachment #7*), Tanner CARPENTER (*see attachment #29*), and John, Robert, and  
7 Maria GOYETTE (*see attachment #20*).

8 On Friday, December 8, 2017, USFS Special Agent Alex LOMVARDIAS arrived  
9 to assist in the investigation. LOMVARDIAS was briefed on the previous week's  
10 findings and sequence of events. The IT interviewed COMSAT employees and  
11 collected any relevant information that their equipment recorded in relation to the  
12 THOMAS fire (*see attachment #38*).

13 We received the RP list from JR TENBROOK, CAD Manager at FCC. The list  
14 contained the first 309 RP's to the THOMAS fire. The list of callers were in  
15 chronological order, with available contact information and location of their call.  
16 Because the fire became well established within the canyon relatively early, a  
17 decision was made to contact the first 20 callers on the list. That would capture the  
18 first 16 minutes of the fire being witnessed. The goal was to obtain pertinent  
19 information/data associated with these callers (*see attachment #52*).

20 On Saturday, December 9, 2017, the IT traveled to Saint Thomas Aquinas  
21 College and met with Peter RIOUX, a faculty member of Saint Thomas Aquinas  
22 College. RIOUX was an RP to the THOMAS fire and had called VCFD Fire Station  
23 20 prior to them receiving the initial dispatch from FCC (*see attachment #8*). Later  
24 that day we met with VCFD Fire Captain Mel LOVO at the Santa Paula Airport.  
25 LOVO was Copter Manager on Copter 7 the evening of the THOMAS fire (*see*  
26 *attachment #25*). At approximately 6:00 PM, I spoke with Fire Engineer Terry BELL  
27 at Santa Paula Fire Station 81. BELL lives on Mupu Road at the bottom of Anlauf  
28 Canyon Road (*see attachment #28*).

29 On Monday, December 11, 2017, the IT established two private and secured  
30 classrooms at the VCFD Regional Training Center (RTC), Camarillo, as home base

1 and offices. VCFD Firefighter Paramedic Aimin ALTON joined the investigation as a  
2 Technical Specialist to assist with office management, image and data analysis (see  
3 *attachment #3*).

4 As requested by the IT, on Wednesday, December 13, 2017, the VCSO  
5 Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Team flew an area of interest in the THOMAS  
6 fire (see *attachment #91*). Simultaneously, a CAL FIRE Light Imaging, Detection  
7 and Ranging (LiDAR) team was surveying the same area (see *attachments #2 and*  
8 *#59*).

9 On Thursday, December 14, 2017, the IT analyzed the information from the  
10 VCSO OES video camera. The video captured bright flashes of light at Anlauf  
11 Canyon (see *attachment #3*).

12 I contacted the Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR) to  
13 inquire about CCC's facilities and asked that an engineer from their office meet with  
14 the IT to do a site review at the Timber Canyon facility. Engineering Geologist Eric  
15 HEATON, of DOGGR, met with the IT at the oil facility in Anlauf Canyon. HEATON  
16 advised the IT, his specialty was not related to the daily operations of oil well  
17 facilities, therefore he would request that a Senior Engineer with a background in oil  
18 field safe practices would be better suited and would contact us.

19 At approximately 3:00 PM, I received a phone call from Bruce WEIHS, a Senior  
20 Engineer and Supervisor with DOGGR. WEIHS informed me that their program  
21 does not oversee the flare stack system of the oil wells. WEIHS advised me to  
22 contact Air Pollution Control District (APCD).

23 On Friday, December 15, 2017, the IT did a reconnaissance flight in a helicopter  
24 to view the overall fire area in Anlauf Canyon, take photographs of the oil lease site  
25 around their GOA, and to look for a missing plastic drum. The drum was previously  
26 located at the compressor site and had contained methanol. Its location was  
27 unknown and thought to have blown down the canyon (see *attachment #100*).

28 On Monday, December 18, 2017, the IT retrieved raw video footage from Patrick  
29 MAYNARD, OES.



1 On Tuesday, December 19, 2017, SCE sent their LiDAR team to the GOA to  
2 survey the area of interest and their equipment. The IT requested SCE to lower  
3 their power lines when they had completed their LiDAR survey.

4 At approximately 3:45 PM, the IT boarded a helicopter for a reconnaissance  
5 flight over Anlauf Canyon and the CCC oil lease (*see attachment #95*).

6 On Wednesday, December 20, 2017, SCE lowered several spans of power lines.  
7 The IT walked the conductors for examination purposes (*see attachment #2*).

8 On Thursday, December 21, 2017, I met Mark STEINHILBER, Facilities Program  
9 Manager at DOGGR, at VCFD fire station 50 at approximately 7:40 AM. The IT  
10 briefed STEINHILBER on our previous findings at the compressor site located at the  
11 CCC oil facilities in Anlauf Canyon. The IT took him to the compressor site and flare  
12 stack. STEINHILBER examined the site's compressors and flare stack. This  
13 interview and examination was video recorded by the IT (*see attachment #35*). We  
14 departed the oil lease site at approximately 2:00 PM.

15 On Friday, December 22, 2017, I contacted the Ventura County Counsel. I  
16 forwarded them an example of a preservation letter for an electric company. I asked  
17 they draft a similar letter and address it to SCE (*see attachment #53*).

18 On Saturday, December 23, 2017, the VCSO UAS team returned to the GOA to  
19 record another area of interest. A CAL FIRE LiDAR team was also on scene to  
20 survey (*see attachments #2 and #59*).

21 On Tuesday, December 26, 2017, IT gave SCE permission to send their LiDAR  
22 team to the GOA to survey their equipment, while IT was present and continued to  
23 secure and preserve the scene.

24 On Wednesday, December 27, 2017, SCE LiDAR team concluded their  
25 examination. SCE lowered another section of power lines for the IT. The IT  
26 proceeded to examine the power lines and collect evidence (*see attachments #2*  
27 *and #39*).

28 At approximately 1:35 PM, I spoke to Dan FERCY, APCD. FERCY told me the  
29 following, in summary: The APCD does oil field inspections that relate to equipment  
30 that would have adverse effects to the air quality. Flare stacks at oil facilities are

1 considered "control devices" as they burn excess gases. One flare is operational  
2 and permitted at CCC. Every year the flare stack and other equipment are  
3 inspected. Written violations can be imposed upon the company if not in  
4 compliance and minor violations were noted (*see attachment #36*).

5 FERCY was not familiar with the chemical, methanol, being used at the facility.  
6 FERCY suggested I speak with Kerby ZOLULA, also with APCD, since ZOLULA has  
7 more technical information pertaining to oil field practices.

8 FERCY continued to tell me, the oil lease belonged to CRC before it was  
9 purchased by CCC. Prior to CRC, it was owned by VINTAGE PETROLEUM.

10 At approximately 3:00 PM, the IT allowed the California Public Utilities  
11 Commission (CPUC) to conduct their preliminary investigation within the GOA. At  
12 approximately 3:00 PM, I met with Southern California Edison (SCE) Rick  
13 MCCOLLUM and Julie OLIN, both SCE Claims Investigators near the GOA.  
14 MCCOLLUM confirmed the circuit identity in our GOA was named the "CASTRO  
15 circuit." MCCOLLUM further stated at 6:41 PM, their substation reported a remote  
16 automatic recloser alert to their system.

17 On Thursday, December 28, 2017, I spoke with Bruce WEIHS, Senior Engineer  
18 with DOGGR. WEIHS informed me I may make a public records request for  
19 inspection records for CCC. I placed an official request via email for notices of  
20 violations and inspection records (*see attachment #35*).

21 At approximately 11:15 AM, I spoke to Eric WEATHERBEE, APCD.  
22 WEATHERBEE has been inspecting oil lease facilities in the area for the past 20  
23 years. WEATHERBEE confirmed CCC recently purchased the lease from CRC.  
24 They acquired it less than one year ago. WEATHERBEE told me CCC is an east  
25 coast based company and were not very familiar with west coast standards.  
26 Therefore, they received a few minor violations initially (*see attachment #36*). Since  
27 then, CCC has corrected the violations and have remained in good standing.

28 WEATHERBEE identified CCC as Permit #00939. CCC is permitted to operate  
29 two pieces of combustion equipment, one of which is the "glycol reboiler" and the  
30 other as the flare stack. The reboiler separates oil, gas, and water. In addition,

1 there are two engines located at the site; a "Waukesha" engine, at the EP Clark  
2 facility, which acts as standby power for the vapor recovery and an Ingersoll Rand  
3 engine, which is for on-going operations.

4 WEATHERBEE confirmed I may request a public records request through their  
5 website. The request would include the transfer of ownership, last five years of  
6 application materials and permits, and enforcement reports. On Thursday,  
7 December 28, 2017, at approximately 2:00 PM, I sent an official request for the  
8 above items.

9 At 2:25 PM, I spoke to Kerby ZOLULA, APCD. ZOLULA told me the following, in  
10 summary: Methanol is typically injected into a natural gas line as an inhibitor. It  
11 acts as "freeze protection" because there is water present in natural gas. APCD  
12 does not need to permit the use of methanol, as CCC only uses a small amount of it  
13 (*see attachment #36*).

14 I contacted HABLSTON, CCC Partner. I requested a representative meet us to  
15 download equipment data. HABLSTON scheduled a technician from PROCTEK to  
16 arrive Tuesday, January 2, 2018, at 9:00 AM.

17 On Friday, December 29, 2017, the IT went out to search for and collect  
18 surveillance video that would capture any activity within the GOA. A portion of the  
19 IT met with PRICE at 9:30 AM, and ZEIER at 11:45 AM, at the CCC compressor site  
20 for interviews and to review the equipment (*see attachment #32*).

21 At approximately 10:00 AM, the IT made contact with personnel at 300 E.  
22 Esplanade Drive, Oxnard. The building is a high-rise building, known as the tower,  
23 near Highway 101.

24 At 300 E. Esplanade Drive, we met with Quentin SESSYL, Post  
25 Commander/Security for Allied Universal Security Services. Topa Management  
26 Company manages the building and uses Allied Universal as contracted security.  
27 We were told a surveillance camera is posted on the roof of the building, next to a  
28 helicopter pad, pointing towards the northeast.

29 IT reviewed the video from Monday, December 4, 2017, and time stamped at  
30 approximately 6:17 PM. We observed two separate flashes that are consistent with

1 arc flashes. The flashes we observed on the video appear to be within the GOA  
2 that was established for the THOMAS fire. We collected the videos on a thumb  
3 drive (*see attachment #3*).

4 At approximately 3:00 PM, the IT continued to the StorHouse Storage Center  
5 (SSC), located at 3201 West Fifth Street, Oxnard. This location is along the south  
6 perimeter of Oxnard Airport runway. We met with Marc HERMANN and Tony  
7 DUENAS, Operations Manager. Their storage facility has a high definition security  
8 system installed.

9 SSC retained video from the evening of the fire which captured similar footage  
10 the Esplanade tower had, but from a slightly different angle. The SSC video  
11 matched the flashes seen in the previous surveillance video. The video footage was  
12 collected on a thumb drive (*see attachment #3*).

13 On Tuesday, January 2, 2018, at approximately 9:40 AM, the IT met with Renzo  
14 NAVARRETE, from ProcTek, and PRICE, of CCC. We traveled to the compressor  
15 site in Anlauf Canyon. NAVARRETE downloaded gas meter data from the  
16 equipment.

17 While at the compressor site, we re-examined the area where flames were  
18 observed after the THOMAS fire traveled through there. Closer examination of the  
19 enclosed grate and catch basin revealed a pipe was located under the metal mesh  
20 grate. After following the pipe's flow, it was determined natural gas was flowing from  
21 the compressor. After speaking to PRICE, PRICE confirmed he had closed a valve  
22 that controlled the natural gas that fed the fire emitting from the grate. PRICE  
23 recalled doing that on Wednesday, December 6, 2017, which was also the day of  
24 our first interview with him. Once the valve was closed, the fire went out. The valve  
25 that was closed came out of a "suction" intake at the first stage compressor.

26 We then went to CCC's office located at 12720 Ojai Santa Paula Road, Ojai. At  
27 this location, NAVARRETE downloaded additional data from their server. Data was  
28 downloaded on to a thumb drive, utilized by the IT, and printed for this report (*see*  
29 *attachment #32*).

30

1 On Wednesday, January 3, 2018, after analyzing all collected video (TORREY,  
2 TOPA, STORHOUSE, R&R PIPELINE, CLARK GAS) and estimated triangulations,  
3 the IT determined there were two distinct separate flash locations (eastern and  
4 western) approximately one and a half miles apart. These flashes occurred nearly  
5 simultaneously and appeared to be on the same circuit. The IT determined these  
6 were areas of interest. IT inspected both areas of interest and observed physical  
7 evidence associated with the triangulated eastern flashes. The physical evidence  
8 observed (power lines) was consistent with phase to phase arcing. The video and  
9 physical evidence showed the THOMAS fire GOA was not in the location of the  
10 eastern flashes. Physical evidence at the triangulated western flashes had already  
11 been observed and collected by the IT during the O&C investigation on Thursday,  
12 December 28, 2017. The IT determined physical evidence on the power lines  
13 associated to the eastern flashes were connected to the same circuit as the power  
14 lines associated to the western flashes (CASTRO Circuit). Based on extensive  
15 analysis of video evidence, the IT determined the start of the THOMAS fire was a  
16 result of the western flashes. The IT collected the physical evidence relating to the  
17 eastern flashes on Friday, January 5, 2018.

18 On Wednesday, January 3, 2018, a preservation letter was drafted by the  
19 Ventura County Counsel to address SCE records and equipment. I signed the  
20 letter, addressed it to SCE with attention to MCCOLLUM, and had Kim BEECHAM,  
21 VCFD front receptionist, mail it via FedEx at approximately 9:40 AM. Pick up was  
22 scheduled for later that same day with tracking number 8028-9397-6654 (see  
23 *attachment #53*).

24 Investigators were initially dispatched to the THOMAS fire on Monday, December  
25 4, 2017. IT was unable to access what was later determined to be the Overall Fire  
26 Area (OFA) due to fire conditions. The OFA was secured on Wednesday,  
27 December 6, 2017, determined to be approximately 230 acres. Ultimately, the IT  
28 narrowed the GOA to approximately 22 acres. Throughout the course of the  
29 THOMAS fire investigation, the IT were able to independently corroborate the GOA  
30 through O&C and Intel. The THOMAS fire GOA was released on Friday, January 5,

1 2018 (*see attachments #2 and #3*).

2 On Monday, January 29 and Tuesday, January 30, 2018, I returned to the  
3 THOMAS fire site to view SCE crews lower and remove power line equipment (*see*  
4 *attachment #55*).

5 On Tuesday, May 29 through May 31, 2018, Investigators from CAL FIRE and  
6 VCFD met with Jim NOLT, Professional Engineer (PE). The IT utilized NOLT on  
7 several occasions throughout the course of the Thomas fire investigation to evaluate  
8 the electrical system within the OFA and GOA. We reviewed SCE data that was  
9 submitted to us on April 6, 2018, NOLT created a timeline of events that occurred  
10 associated with the Castro circuit on Monday, December 4, 2017.

11 On Wednesday, October 24, 2018, we received a report created by NOLT (*see*  
12 *attachment #63*). The IT reviewed NOLT's report and concluded it further  
13 corroborated the IT's final hypothesis.

14 On Saturday, November 17, 2018, we added documents received per our  
15 request from SCE dated Friday, October 26, 2018. The response letter and  
16 documents from SCE are in regards to the Thomas fire investigation report are  
17 pertaining to meter No. 254000-004308 and 222-931684. We still have yet to  
18 receive the data requested in its entirety (*see attachment #64*).

19  
20 **OPINIONS & CONCLUSIONS:**

21  
22 The following opinions and conclusions were based on supporting  
23 documentation, supplemental reports, statements made to investigators,  
24 audio/video recordings, CAD reports obtained from dispatch centers, and evidence  
25 found while conducting the origin and cause investigation.

26 Skies were clear with no thunderhead or cloud build-up observed. There was no  
27 evidence located within the GOA consistent with lightning strikes or fire resulting  
28 from a lightning strike. A lightning detection map was printed and confirmed there  
29 was no recent lightning activity in the area. Based upon the weather data, I  
30 eliminated a lightning caused fire (*see attachment #43*).



1 There are no campgrounds in the area where the GOA is located. The area is  
2 not typically used for camping and did not have campfire rings, campsites, piled  
3 material typically associated with a campfire, or indications of any campfires near  
4 the GOA. The fire occurred on private property. DOLLAR told the IT he never has  
5 fires on his property of any type. Based upon the lack of the above items, I  
6 eliminated a campfire caused fire.

7 The IT did not observe or locate any cigarette butts or other smoking  
8 paraphernalia within the GOA. All people who had access to the DOLLAR ranch the  
9 day of the THOMAS fire were interviewed and stated they do not smoke. Based  
10 upon the above facts the IT eliminated smoking as a potential cause of the fire.

11 Ventura County APCD had a burn ban in effect which prohibited debris burning.  
12 There were no burn barrels, piles of trash, or signs of burn barrels being used to  
13 conduct debris burning located near the GOA. Additionally, the IT did not observe  
14 any of the previously mentioned items during a perimeter search of the area,  
15 eliminating debris burning as a potential cause of this fire.

16 There was no evidence of items typically associated with an intentionally set fire  
17 was observed/located within the GOA. The inaccessibility to the DOLLAR ranch,  
18 which is controlled by locked gates and fences is not consistent with that of a person  
19 who commits the crime of arson. Additionally, all persons who had access to the  
20 DOLLAR ranch the day of the THOMAS fire were vetted, and if needed, alibis were  
21 corroborated eliminating incendiary as a potential cause of the fire.

22 There was no indication of equipment use in the GOA prior to the IT arriving to  
23 the incident. During the investigation, the IT examined the GOA and observed no  
24 signs of motorized equipment recently used within the general vicinity. The IT did  
25 not observe any disturbed soils, or any area where equipment had been used. The  
26 GOA is not located along public roads. The nearest road is an unmaintained paved  
27 road that traverses through the DOLLAR property. The only people that have  
28 access to the DOLLAR property is the DOLLAR family, oil lease representatives, a  
29 cattle rancher (Robert FROST) who leases a portion of the DOLLAR ranch, and a  
30 radio station representative (Richard RUDMAN) who maintains an antenna on the

1 DOLLAR property. Vehicles operating on the DOLLAR ranch the day of the  
2 THOMAS fire were all evaluated/inspected by the IT. The IT obtained current  
3 registration and insurance information for all vehicles in question. The last vehicle  
4 on the DOLLAR ranch the day of the fire was owned and operated by RUDMAN  
5 who exited the lower gate toward Highway 150 approximately one hour prior to the  
6 fire. There was no mention by DOLLAR of any vehicles in and or around the  
7 property at the time the THOMAS fire started. Additionally, the IT saw no signs of  
8 Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) use in the area. No catalytic converter particulates were  
9 located within the GOA. Based upon the above facts, I eliminated equipment as a  
10 potential cause of the subject fire.

11 There are no railroads or railways within Anlauf Canyon, therefore I eliminated  
12 railroad equipment as a cause of the subject fire.

13 There were no toys, forts, or evidence of any activities associated with children  
14 playing with fire near the GOA. The only known juveniles in the area were at the  
15 KOA campground located approximately one and one half miles southwest of the  
16 GOA. The DOLLAR ranch is remote and has locked gates and fencing at all access  
17 points to the property. Based on the above facts playing with fire was eliminated as  
18 the cause of the fire.

19 The County of Ventura has a strict ordinance not allowing the use of fireworks  
20 within the County. No witnesses reported seeing, or hearing any indication of the  
21 use of fireworks. The area where the fire occurred is on private property and is not  
22 open to the public. Additionally, no persons who had access to the DOLLAR ranch  
23 the day of the THOMAS fire observed anyone lighting fireworks or heard sounds  
24 typically associated with use of fireworks. During the examination of the GOA, no  
25 remnants of fireworks were located. Based upon the above facts, fireworks were  
26 eliminated as a potential cause of the fire.

27 No signs of cutting, welding or grinding of metal was noted during the course of  
28 the investigation. Therefore, I eliminated this as a potential cause of the fire.

29 There were no reports of anyone engaging in recreational shooting activities prior  
30 to the fire. DOLLAR does have a shooting area established on his property, but



1 DOLLAR told the IT nobody has utilized the shooting area for two months. All  
2 people who had access to the DOLLAR ranch were interviewed and stated they did  
3 not hear or witness anyone engaged in recreational shooting. Therefore, I  
4 eliminated shooting as a potential cause of the fire.

5 During the examination of the GOA, the IT did not locate any broken glass or  
6 glass bottles. The fire occurred approximately one and a half hours after sundown.  
7 Based upon these facts glass refraction was eliminated a caused of the fire.

8 Spontaneous combustion was excluded as a potential cause. No evidence of  
9 mulch or organic material was located within the GOA that had the ability to  
10 spontaneously combust. There was no evidence of mulch or organic material piles  
11 hay or grass in the GOA. Spontaneous combustion was eliminated a cause of the  
12 fire.

13 The Timber Canyon Lease owned and operated by CCC was located along the  
14 east perimeter of the OFA. A flare stack was located within the Timber Canyon  
15 lease, approximately three quarters of mile from the perimeter of the GOA. The IT  
16 did not observe any indications of a malfunction in, on or immediately around the  
17 flare stack. The IT obtained security video footage revealing the flare stack was not  
18 actively burning at the time the THOMAS fire started (*see attachment #3*). The IT  
19 did observe a fire burning within the CCC compressor site. Interviews with oil field  
20 professionals and observed burn patterns indicate this fire was secondary to the  
21 THOMAS fire and contained to the compressor site. The IT determined the cause  
22 of the compressor site fire was a result of ember cast from the THOMAS fire that  
23 ignited the natural gas. Based on the above facts, I was able to eliminate flare  
24 stacks or a fire originating within the oil facility as a potential cause of the THOMAS  
25 fire.

26 Due to portions of the DOLLAR ranch being utilized as cattle grazing land, the IT  
27 evaluated fencing in the OFA and GOA. The IT did not locate or observe any  
28 electrical fencing, and noted only barbed wire fencing on subject property.

29 Therefore I eliminated electric fences as a potential cause of the fire.  
30

1 My experience and knowledge of conducting fire investigations, includes  
2 instances where power lines producing heat/sparks in a receptive fuel bed, has the  
3 potential for igniting a low intensity, slow developing incipient fire dependent on  
4 wind. Weather conditions and low fuel moistures contributed to the ignition and  
5 rapid extension of the THOMAS fire. During the course of the investigation, the IT  
6 collected many pieces of evidence/data substantiating the determination of an  
7 electrical event. The IT utilized the collected data to triangulate the multiple arc  
8 flashes as well as the fire during its initial growth.

9 The facts and circumstances revealed during the course of the investigation  
10 indicate the fire was caused by a phase to phase contact within a receptive fuel bed.  
11 The IT's O&C, Intel, collection and evaluation of evidence concluded that the power  
12 lines owned and operated by SCE were the cause of the THOMAS fire (see  
13 *attachment #2 and #3*).

14 Based on my training, knowledge, experience, observations at scene,  
15 consultation with other fire investigators, expert opinions, data analysis and the  
16 elimination of other causes through the scientific methodology, I determined the fire  
17 occurred when a phase to phase contact arced ejecting molten metal particles onto  
18 dry ground vegetation.

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24  
25  11/18/18

26  
27 Signature

Date

28 **Christine SAQUI**

29 **Fire/Arson Investigator**

30 **Ventura County Fire Department**

**10 – ATTACHMENTS:**

- 1 – NFIRS
- 2 – Origin and Cause
- 3 – Data Collection and Analysis
- 4 – DINS
- 5 – Witnesses 1 thru 3, D. DOLLAR, C. DOLLAR, M. DOLLAR
- 6 – Witnesses 4 thru 7, Dori CLARKE, A. NUNEZ, J. TAIT, J. VALENZUELA
- 7 – Witness 8, R. RUDMAN
- 8 – Witness 9, P. RIOUX
- 9 – Witnesses 11 thru 13, T. SALAS, S. SWINDLE, S. BUCKLES
- 10 – Witnesses 14 & 15, J. GAMEZ Sr., J. GAMEZ Jr.
- 11 – Witness 16, R. FROST
- 12 – Witnesses 17 & 18, M. LOVO, K WILLIAMS
- 13 – Witnesses 20 thru 26, L. THAYER, T. GARCIA, L. MOORE, M. HAGGARD, R. LEMON, J. RICHARD, B. ALLEN
- 14 – Witness 27, J. MONZADA
- 15 – Witnesses 28 & 29, A. PRICE, R. PRICE
- 16 – Witness 30, T. TAYLOR
- 17 – Witness 31, E. BROCK
- 18 – Witness 32, M. MCLEAN
- 19 – Witness 33, C. TULBERG
- 20 – Witnesses 34 thru 36, J. GOYETTE, M. GOYETTE, R. GOYETTE
- 21 – Witness 37, S. SMITH
- 22 – Witnesses 38 & 39, P. MOREHART, M. MOREHART
- 23 – Witnesses 40 & 41, P. HERNANDEZ, N. HERNANDEZ
- 24 – Witnesses 42 & 43, N. BROUWER, J. BROUWER
- 25 – Witness 44, T. HENDERSON
- 26 – Witnesses 45 & 46, Christine LAW, Charles LAW
- 27 – Witnesses 47 & 48, F. SCHREINER, RAMANDA



- 1 28 – Witness 49, T. BELL
- 2 29 – Witness 50, T. CARPENTER
- 3 30 – Witness 51, M. RIEDER
- 4 31 – Witness 52, M. ALVERADO
- 5 32 – Witnesses 53 thru 58, T. HABILSTON, M. ZEIER, M. DEAN Jr.,
- 6 S. PRICE, C. FERNANDEZ, K. BROWN
- 7 33 – Witness 59, J. BRADEY
- 8 34 – Witnesses 60 & 61, Daniel CLARKE, N. PAPE
- 9 35 – Witness 62, M. STEINHILBER
- 10 36 – Witness 64 – 66, E. WEATHERBEE, K. ZOLULA, D. FERCY
- 11 37 – Witness 67, M. EVANS
- 12 38 – Witnesses 68 thru 71, T. HUNTER, G. WHITE, D. BERN, H.
- 13 WISNIEWSKI
- 14 39 – Witness 73, J. OLIN
- 15 40 – Witness 75, R. MCCOLLUM
- 16 41 – Chain of Custody, Thursday, December 28, 2017 (LE-76)
- 17 42 – Chain of Custody, Friday, January 5, 2018 (LE-76)
- 18 43 – Forecasted Weather (National Weather Service)
- 19 44 – Local Weather Report (RAWS)
- 20 45 – Lightning Detection Map
- 21 46 – SCE Map of Equipment in the GOA
- 22 47 – Ventura County Assessor Parcel Number
- 23 48 – VCFD Incident Detail Report and 911 Audio
- 24 49 – CHP CAD and 911 Audio
- 25 50 – VCSO Incident Detail Report and 911 Audio
- 26 51 – Scene security
- 27 52 – Reporting Parties contact list
- 28 53 – SCE preservation letter
- 29 54 – SCE/CAL FIRE MOU
- 30 55 – SAQUI Supplemental report for Monday, January 29, 2018



- 1           56 – SCE Provided Data (3 binders)
- 2           A – SCE Response Letter, April 4, 2018
- 3           B – Wakefield Substation, DNA History Plot and Data
- 4           C – CASTRO Circuit Maps
- 5           D – RAR0179 Graph and Data
- 6           E – Pole Data pages 12 – 31
- 7           F – Interruption Log Sheet for RAR1228
- 8           G – RAR1228 Graph and Data
- 9           H – RAR1228 Cycle Graphic Display
- 10          I – Maintenance records and trouble reports
- 11          J – Maintenance records, pages 709 – 710
- 12          K – Maintenance records, pages 711 – 713
- 13          L – Maintenance records, pages 714 – 747
- 14          M – Maintenance records, pages 748 – 765
- 15          N – Event data log, pages 933 – 935
- 16          O – Pole Data, pages 696 – 700
- 17          P – Meter 1684 Events/Exceptions Detail Report, pages 1242 – 1243
- 18          Q – Meter 35324 Event Data, pages 685 – 692
- 19          R – Meters 6053 and 65411 Event Data, pages 673 – 681
- 20          S – Meter 376309 Event Data, pages 682 – 684
- 21          T – 2014 Tree Service, pages 32 – 228
- 22          U – 2015 Tree Service, pages 229 – 449
- 23          V – 2016 Tree Service, pages 450 – 672
- 24          W – 2017 Compliance Trees in Collector, pages 855 – 923
- 25          X – 2017 Compliance Prescriptions in Collector, pages 733 – 854
- 26          Y – Interruption Log Sheets, pages 4 – 10
- 27          57 – Additional Information Requests to SCE and Replies, June 15, 29, 2018
- 28          58 – SCE Thomas Letter, June 15, 2018
- 29          59 – LiDAR
- 30          60 – SCE provided data, July, 13, 2018

- 1 61 – LAW All Electric meter data request (SCE)
- 2 62 – Carbon All Electric meter data request (SCE)
- 3 63 – JHNOLT Associates Project Status Memorandum
- 4 64 – SCE provided data, October 26, 2018
- 5 65 –
- 6 66 –
- 7 67 –
- 8 68 –
- 9 69 –
- 10 70 –
- 11 71 –
- 12 72 –
- 13 73 –
- 14 74 –
- 15 75 –
- 16 76 –
- 17 77 –
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- 19 79 –
- 20 80 –
- 21 81 –
- 22 82 –
- 23 83 –
- 24 84 –
- 25 85 –
- 26 86 –
- 27 87 –
- 28 88 –
- 29 89 – Disk of Audio Interviews
- 30 90 – HATCH case Photos and Video

- 1 91 – DELAROSA Case Videos
- 2 92 – KINSLEY Case Photos
- 3 93 – KELLEY Case Photos and Videos
- 4 94 – SAQUI Case Photos
- 5 95 – ALTON Case Photos
- 6 96 – CHAPIN Case Photos
- 7 97 – BERGH Case Photos
- 8 98 – RUSSELL Case Photos
- 9 99 – HARRIS Case Photos
- 10 100 – SNODGRASS Case Photos

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