



NEWS



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Monticello Dam, Solano County)

On January 4, 2015, at approximately 1510 hours CHP air units were requested to assist Vacaville Fire Protection District with a search for a man that had fallen from a cliff and was stuck in a tree on the cliff side. CHP Airplane 31 (Air-31) received a latitude and longitude of the hiking area from CHP dispatch based on the 911 cell phone call from the victim's son. The victim's 11 year old son was hiking with his father when his father fell from the cliff. The initial GPS coordinates did not identify a location near where the father and son were hiking. A resourceful Solano County Sheriff and Fire dispatcher used the party's name from the 911 call and located a Facebook profile post where the father identified the trail that he and his son would be hiking today. After relaying the new location information to the searchers, Air 31 (piloted by CHP Officer Chad Jessee and CHP Flight Officer Jeff Moring) located the 11 year old on the cliff overlooking his father's location. A-31 remained over the scene until Helicopter 30 (H-30) arrived on scene. A-31 assisted H-30 in locating the 11 year old boy. The crew of H-30 determined that due to the rugged, remote location a hoist rescue would be required. While CHP Officer/Pilot Pete Gavitte held a steady hover over the 11 year old boy, CHP Officer Craig Koyl lowered CHP Officer/Paramedic Ben Schmidt to extract the young boy. The boy was able to direct the helicopter crew to his injured father. After hoisting the young boy safely to a nearby command post, H-30 returned to tend to the injured man on the cliff side in a tree. Officer Koyl again inserted Officer Schmidt (this time into the tree on the cliff side where the victim was located). Officer Schmidt triaged the victim, bandaged and prepared the victim for hoist rescue. Officer Schmidt was able to package the patient for hoist with the assistance of two Fire/Rescue personnel from Vacaville Fire Protection District that had climbed the cliff side to assist. H-30 hoisted the victim and Officer Schmidt from the steep cliff side/tree. H-30 landed at the command post and transferred the injured party to CHP Helicopter 20 (H-20) for transport to a nearby trauma center with possible life threatening injuries.

The California Highway Patrol Golden Gate Division Air Operations unit, based at the Napa County Airport, operates four aircraft (two airplanes and two helicopters) which patrol approximately 6,923 square miles that incorporates a residential population of more than 7 million people. The helicopter is routinely staffed with a CHP Officer/Pilot and a CHP Officer/Paramedic. The helicopter is equipped with a rescue hoist that has 165 feet of rescue cable that can lift patients and/or rescuers, that can weigh up to 450 pounds, into the helicopter.

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