

Rapid Lesson Sharing

Event Type: Visual Signaling Aircraft or Others

New Technology Improves Visual Signaling in the Wildland Fire Environment

Flashlights have been used for decades on the fireline for signaling to aircraft, as well as to other ground personnel.

But today, new technology now provides the perfect flashlight that wildland firefighters can use as signaling tools.

Several companies make these small, lightweight 1,000-lumen tactical flashlights. They can be used in either strobe or traditional mode. For establishing your visual on-the-ground location/target with aircraft, one pilot recently called these flashlights “a game changer.” They can be used for all purposes for which firefighters currently use their mirrors for signaling.

These flashlights’ powerful 1,000-lumen bulbs—driven by a small camera battery—can be seen from more than one mile away. Furthermore, with its 30-degree field-of-view, you don’t have to be exact when selecting your target to “strobe”. The battery life is approximately five hours.

The Fenix 35 Tactical Flashlight (cost approximately \$70) is one of these 1,000-lumen tactical flashlights.

“Fenix is not the only company making 1,000-lumen tactical flashlights,” informs Kelly Boyd, Module Leader on the BLM’s Unaweep Wildland Fire Module. “It was just the one shown to us and has proved to be another way we can change and improve how we operate in the wildland fire environment.”



The Fenix 35 Tactical Flashlight is one of the 1,000-lumen devices available on the market today.

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