



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Jennifer Rodi
Air Safety Investigator
Central Region

Person Contacted: Steve Ahrendt
NTSB Accident Number: CEN18LA025

Narrative:

During the conversation, Mr. Ahrendt stated the following:

Mr. Ahrendt was the passenger on board the helicopter. Prior to the flight he and the ground team spoke extensively with the pilot about the plan for moving the cattle from the corn field. This discussion included multiple warnings about the powerlines.

Prior to the flight he secured his 3-point seatbelt – the pilot showed him how to use the seatbelt. He stated that the pilot was also wearing a seatbelt. After takeoff, they flew north to allow everyone on the ground time to get into position. They flew over the powerlines for review and familiarity of their location. Once everyone on the ground was in position they spotted the cattle and started pushing them towards the gate.

They had been flying about 10 minutes and were concentrating on the cattle when they hit the powerlines. Mr. Ahrendt stated that they merely lost their bearings at the time of the collision. He recalled the pilot reaching down and forward for something after the impact; the pilot did not say anything to him following the impact with the powerlines. He stated that he did not see or hear anything abnormal with the helicopter prior to the impact.

A colleague of Mr. Ahrendt had recommended the pilot for the herding job. The pilot had previous experience herding the cattle from the air and was well known in the community to be effective at this task.

Mr. Ahrendt sustained broken ribs and an injured shoulder during the accident. He was released from the hospital on the Friday following the accident.