



National Transportation Safety Board

Office of Aviation Safety – Central Region

Interview Summary: Aaron Moore, Lineman – CEN19FA020

Date: November 3, 2019

Location: Hampton Inn Lobby

Interviewer: Courtney Liedler, NTSB - Denver

Interviewee: Aaron Moore

During the Interview, Mr. Moore stated the following:

He has had worked for Air2 as an apprentice line maintenance for about one year.

On the accident flight, he had departed after lunch on the short haul operation. They approached the south end of the line and the pilot slowed to get ready for the transfer and maneuvered close to the structure. They approached from the opposite side of the wood structure. Mr. Moore got below the cross arm of the structure

Mr. Moore stated they were at the same wood structure two days prior (Tuesday morning) to the accident. The crew noticed there were some bad spots in the wooden structure they would be decommissioning and decided to reassess the structure before proceeding. The steel pole had not been set (installed) at the time of that flight. The steel pole was erected on Wednesday morning. The line crew had been “weathered out” Tuesday afternoon, Wednesday and Thursday. Friday was the first day back to flying.

The steel pole was “bigger, heavier, and taller” than all the others that had been erected as part of the project. The top of the steel pole impacted was 98 ft in height while the top of the other poles were 85 ft in height. The steel poles were always the tallest. The height of the wooden structure was 45 feet in height.

The helicopter approached the steel pole from the opposite side of the wooden structure. Mr. Moore got below the crossarm and tied his tools off to the crossarm. The pilot descended but was a little too low so Mr. Moore asked the pilot to raise him via his Bluetooth headset. He was adjusted 2 or 3 times and then asked the pilot to hold in position so he could get attached to pole. He threw the fall protection around the wooden pole and unhooked. At this point the helicopter was “getting choppy and moved quite a bit.” He explained he could see the helicopter shadow straight in front of him, to the left of the steel pole. The tail of the helicopter was ‘darting around.’ Mr. Moore noted the pilot sounded

“different, like was struggling with something and he was not calm.” As soon as he got his carabiner clipped in to fasten himself to the pole, he heard the pilot loudly yell an expletive. Mr. Moore was jerked upward and to the left. He heard a loud “boom” and the sound of metal sheering off. The engine was making noises that sounded different, like a “metallic crunch.” The helicopter engine went silent before impacting the ground. He did not look up at the helicopter before or during the event.

Mr. Moore stated they had flown all morning and had completed 3 structures prior to taking a break for lunch about noon. He arrived at the airport in Corning between 0715 to 0745, before the sun came up, and began flying about 0830. The pilot would typically go out and fly the area to look for obstructions and/or hazards before picking up the crew.

Mr. Moore stated the pilot would use apps to check the wind speed. That day, they were flying high enough to see the weather moving in while they were completing the last structure before lunch. The pilot said he was going to check the weather before going back up after lunch, but Mr. Moore was not sure if the pilot did because he ate in a different truck. The Crew Leader, Elliot Kornegay, also checks the weather. Mr. Moore recalled the winds were out of the west and were steady. It was not gusty, and the treetops were not blowing “that hard.” Mr. Moore said they approached the tower flying straight into the wind.

After the helicopter impacted the ground, Mr. Moore climbed off the pole and took his equipment down. He went to the helicopter and saw the pilot still in the left seat, strapped in and leaning over on the right side. His face was in the water and he was responsive.

Mr. Moore did not recall the smell of fuel at the accident site and did not know for sure if the pilot re-fueled at lunch. The landing zone, where they ate lunch and re-fueled, was located about ½ mile from the structure they were working. He explained the helicopter does not return to Corning for fuel. The fuel truck is parked at the landing zone, along with the equipment trailer. Mr. Moore also said the one of the ground crew helps to monitor time in the air and re-fueling needs. Before lunch, the ground crew called the pilot to remind him of the time he has been in the air and the pilot said he was “good to get them back to the landing zone” for lunch.