



EVENT REPORT

THIS FORM SHALL BE FILLED OUT AND SUBMITTED WHENEVER A WORKPLACE EVENT OCCURS THAT IS NOT WITHIN THE SCOPE OF NORMAL OPERATIONS SUCH AS: OUTAGES, DAMAGE TO EQUIPMENT OR PROPERTY, VEHICLE DAMAGES AND ACCIDENTS, INJURIES, ETC.

THIS FORM IS DOCUMENTING (MARK ONE):

☐ CLOSE CALL	AN UNEXPECTED EVENT WHERE NO PROPERTY WAS DAMAGED AND NO PERSONAL INJURY SUSTAINED, BUT WHERE, GIVEN A SLIGHT SHIFT IN TIME OR POSITION, DAMAGE AND/OR INJURY COULD HAVE OCCURRED.
☐ INCIDENT	AN UNEXPECTED EVENT THAT MAY RESULT IN PROPERTY DAMAGE, BUT DOES NOT RESULT IN PERSONAL INJURY OR ILLNESS.
☒ ACCIDENT	AN UNEXPECTED EVENT THAT MAY RESULT IN PROPERTY DAMAGE, AND DOES RESULT IN A PERSONAL INJURY OR ILLNESS.
☐ OBSERVATION	ANYTHING THAT AN EMPLOYEE WITNESSES OR SUGGESTS TO MITIGATE A POTENTIAL INCIDENT.

PERSON MAKING THIS REPORT	Clay Goff, Josh Groves		
DATE OF EVENT	29-Dec-20	TIME OF EVENT (LOCAL)	8:38
ADDRESS/COORDINATES	Jones County, Ellisville, Mississippi 31.611837N, 89.086378W		
UTILITY/CUSTOMER	Mississippi Power		

PERSON(S) INVOLVED

Jason Krakowiak	Pilot-Signature	
Clay Goff	GSS/PM-Signature	
Josh Groves	LZG-Signature	
Wade Camp	ECI Arborist-Mississippi Power	

PERSON(S) INJURED AND EXTENT OF INJURIES

Jason Krakowiak	Fatal

EQUIPMENT INVOLVED (TYPE OF EQUIPMENT AND ID NUMBERS)

N103SU	Hughes 369D Helicopter
Saw 1251	Aerial Saw

DESCRIPTION OF THE EVENT

DESCRIBE THE TASKS BEING PERFORMED AND THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

At 08:30 Signature pilot Jason Krakowiak took off from the LZ at Purvis Field in Ellisville, Mississippi to conduct his first trimming flight of the day on the South Jones to Laurel East 230KV transmission line. Jason read his fuel load off to LZG Josh Groves at 400lbs (full fuel). At 08:33 Jason trimmed some branches near the LZ that the property owner requested to be cut, then he began to ferry the helicopter and saw at a north heading to the right-of-way. The trimming area was approximately 2.7 miles north of the LZ. GSS Clay Goff arrived at the West side of the right-of-way and positioned himself on the south end of the trimming area at 08:35. While Jason flew to the first area to be cut, Clay began to call out hazards in the right-of-way such as deer stands, and Jason verbally confirms he has the hazards in sight. Clay estimated that while they communicated, the bottom of the saw was flying about 40-50 feet above the tree tops on the east side of the right-of-way still heading northbound. Shortly after this communication takes place, at 08:38 Jason calls over the radio "making an emergency landing." Immediately after the emergency landing callout, Clay looked at the aircraft and stated the helicopter made a quick forward decent until the saw disappeared into the tree line. This happened 0.75 miles north of Clay's position over the trees on the east side of the right-of-way. Once the saw began contacting the trees, it abruptly stopped all forward momentum of the helicopter and caused it to fall rapidly into the trees nose first on the passenger side. The saw layed on the forest floor upside down, the two lower pipes hung in a pine tree where they connect, and the force of the helicopter striking trees and impacting the ground destroyed it, caused the aircraft to catch fire, and killed Jason.

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE ACTION TAKEN

Immediately after the crash occurred, Clay called Josh at 08:38 saying "Jason just went down, hard landing," sent him and arborist Wade Camp a pin of the area he believed was the crash site, and got back to his truck. Clay proceeded west out of the right-of-way access road where he turned right to head north on Old Hwy 15, right to head east on Truckers Crossing, then right to continue south on Route 15 until he reached the crash site on the right. Smoke in the treeline indicated the crash site location, and Clay was familiar with the area from pre-planning the work. At 8:43 Clay dialed 911 when he was sure he found the area of the crash site and could provide first responders accurate coordinates. The 911 operator told Clay that his phone was being pinged to relay his location to the first responders. Clay entered a driveway 0.25 miles northeast of the crash site, parked his truck on the east side of the right-of-way, exited his vehicle with a 5 pound fire extinguisher and a first aid kit, then proceeded on foot about 100 yards until he found the crash site to his left. Arborist Wade Camp was positioned about 5 spans north of Clay as the crash occurred and arrived to the scene a few seconds before Clay. Clay handed Wade the cell phone so he could continue speaking with the 911 operator. Clay used the 5 pound fire extinguisher to try to contain the flames enough to pull Jason from the wreckage, however it was obvious that Jason was deceased within the wreck and the 5 pound fire extinguisher would not contain the growing flames. At this point the decision was made to back away from the wreck to a safe distance to prevent further injury and wait for first responders to extinguish the fire. Josh arrived at the driveway and contacted Clay with the radio asking if he needed help, the first aid kit, or the AED. Clay responds there's no need because the helicopter is a "total loss," indicating Jason did not survive the crash and instructs Josh to wait by the road and flag the first responders in. At 08:54 the 911 call ends and sirens can be heard in the distance. Josh called Signature management at 08:56 to notify them of the crash. Signature management declared a company "All Stop" and all other crews immediately ceased operations. At 09:01 first responders arrive on scene and begin to battle the fire. It took approximately 45 minutes to extinguish the flames due to the burning magnesium, jet fuel, and the location of the crash being so far from the road and about 100 feet into the thick treeline. By 09:05 all other Signature crews were confirmed to be safely on the ground and full company safety shutdown began.

WITNESS NAME(S) AND CONTACT INFO

Clay Goff		
Josh Groves		
Wade Camp		

POLICE REPORT FILED?☒ X YES☐ NO**POLICE DEPARTMENT NAME**

NTSB, FAA, Jones County Sheriff Dept.

REPORT REFERENCE NUMBER**WEATHER CONDITIONS DURING THE EVENT**

Sunny, Clear Skies, winds <5mph, 54 degrees fahrenheit

MITIGATION/AVOIDANCE STRATEGIES

Currently the FAA and NTSB are leading the crash investigation. Their findings could take months to be released. When a cause has been determined all appropriate mitigation and avoidance strategies will be updated and released. Signature management is discussing options for mitigating exposure time with an external load. Internally Signature is updating their flight policies to include a daily pre-flight without an external load. This pre-flight will involve the pilot taking off from the LZ to conduct a power check and complete a high visual reconnaissance of the work areas for hazards. The goal is for the pilot to take the time completely inspect the aircraft and the work area without also having to focus on carrying an external load.

REPORT SUBMITTED TO	Signature Safety Department	DATE OF SUBMITTAL	12/30/20
SIGNATURE	Clay Goff, Josh Groves	TITLE	GSS/PM, LZG

IF POSSIBLE AND IT'S SAFE TO DO SO, PLEASE TAKE CLEAR PICTURES RELATING TO THIS EVENT AND SUBMIT THEM WITH THIS REPORT.