



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Brian C. Rayner
Senior Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: June 28, 2019
Person Contacted: Stephen Zalaskus – Director of Safety
NTSB Accident Number: ERA18FA122 Smethport, PA

Narrative:

Mr. Zalaskus was the Director of Safety for the operator of the accident helicopter. During a lengthy email chain, Mr. Zalaskus answered several questions, and provided definitions for industry-specific equipment and jargon. Following an email reply from Mr. Zalaskus, he was contacted by telephone for clarification on some points, and the notes of that conversation were logged at the end of the email chain, which was attached below.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: HLH record of conversation
Date: Tuesday, April 17, 2018 10:08:35 AM
Attachments: [REDACTED]

1. Where is Mr. Miqueli right now?
2. Armor Rod? Curling/spiraling steel rods? Yes
3. Wire 'still in the block' mean the 'dolly'??? Yes
4. What is the 'shoe'? The shoe is the device attached to the pole.
5. What is "inside the bite" and what "safety" installed?
Inside the bite! That is the area where once the helicopter is inside it, should the wire come loose from the dolly, the wire will move towards the helicopter. The 'bite' is considered a horizontal distance, but it has a vertical dimension.
A "choker safety" should have been installed. The safety they were using to go on the wire wasn't long enough where it could stay on the wire while the armor rod was being installed.
1. Who typically installs the safety? The safety is something the lineman will install after the armor rod, and before the hoist. The safety they had in the helicopter was too short to install prior to the armor rod. Was there anything in the SOP that says, "go back for a longer safety?" That is more or less a contractor thing. That's their equipment. We don't have an SOP on their equipment.
2. SOP approach and departure.
New construction of "High Tension Power lines"
Wooden pole is an "h-frame structure" and the metal pole.
The guy on the skid was short and stocky.