

Name: Cameron Alley

Date of Birth:

Tel:

Location of Interviewee: Florida

Address: Winter Heaven, FL 33880

Subject: Interview regarding the incident on 01/11/2018 where he fell from an electric tower in connection with moving a ladder with a helicopter while he was on the ladder.

Date and Time: 02/07/2018 at 16:28 local time (verify this in Castle).

Location: Office of FLM Manuel Perez, FSDO-63

FAA Participants: Nusret Guvercin, ASI Ops, FSDO-63

William Melendez, ASI Ops at FSDO-63

Manuel Perez, FLM, Acting Office Manager, FSDO-63

Interview:

During the interview, Mr. Cameron Alley stated he worked for company ARC, based at Indiana, arrived in Puerto Rico in October, 2017, and his supervisor is Chris Faus. At the time of the referenced incident on 01/11/2018, he had one other coworker with him on the same electric tower. Mr. Alley identified this other person (coworker) to be "Russ". He identified the helicopter pilot to be "Jason" and Mr. Alley stated that he did not know the helicopter pilot before.

Mr. Alley stated that he did receive a daily task briefing in the morning of the day of the incident that involved discussion of which electric poles to work on, and the type of work to do on each pole. He stated that there were no discussions of any emergency procedures.

Mr. Alley stated that he and his coworker (Russ) were taken from the landing zone to the electric tower with the helicopter in the morning of the day of the incident. The linemen were moved with the ladder to the various sections of the electric tower several times during the day. Due to bees at the worksite, both linemen were wearing bee suits. The bee suit's head cover was marked with "+" sign with black electrical tape to serve as visual signal to the pilot. The linemen were up on the tower since early morning up until the time of this accident, wearing bee suits the whole time, and they never came off the tower for any break. The lineman finished hanging wire and installing insulators on one part of the tower, and switched to the other side. In this new location, there was not enough workspace to lift the high-tension wire and hang it on the arm of the electric tower. The ladder was in the middle of the needed workspace. Mr. Alley radioed the helicopter via walky-talky to move the ladder out of the way. Initially, the ladder and the lineman were moved directly upwards from their current location, and there was still not enough space. Next, the ladder and the lineman were moved to the left side of the electric tower and left on the top arm. The helicopter picked up the wire and hung it on the arm of the tower, and returned to pick up the ladder with the lineman. Mr. Alley's recount of the events was that pilot was pulling while Mr. Alley was still attached to the tower's arm. Mr. Alley tried to signal the pilot with hand

and head moves that he was not ready for pick up. While pilot was applying pull, Mr. Alley reached over and disconnected his safety connection to the tower's arm. At the same time, pilot reversed the pull and began to descend and the ladder landed (or touched) on the tower's arm, preventing its further descent, and the ladder came off the grapple with further descent of the helicopter, at this time lineman began to fall approximately 80 feet to the ground with the ladder falling with him and on top of him.

Mr. Alley sustained serious injuries because of this fall. He described his injuries to be 3 broken ribs, two dislocated joint, a hole in the lung, 2 broken wrists, shattered ligaments, etc.

Mr. Alley stated that during the day, it was windy, and weather was not a factor in this accident. Mr. Alley was wearing a bee suit for the first time. He was lifted up to the tower with the ladder in the morning around/after 8 am and he had been on the tower with the bee suit since that time until this accident. Additionally, Mr. Alley stated that he had around 17 years of experience as lineman.

Name: Mr. Russ Marion,

Date of Birth: 02/08/1973

Location of Interviewee: Michigan

Address: [REDACTED], Metamora, MI 48435

Subject: Interview regarding the incident on 01/11/2018 where a lineman fell from an electric tower in connection with moving a ladder with helicopter.

Date & time: 02/08/2018 at 1335 local time.

Location: FSDO-63 Main Conference Room

FAA participants: Nusret Guvercin, ASI Ops, FSDO-63
William Melendez, ASI Ops, FSDO-63
Jorge Echegoyen, ASI Ops, FSDO-63

Interview:

There were two linemen working at the electric tower at the time of this occurrence. Both linemen worked on a 16-ft ladder to which they attached themselves while they worked on the tower. The linemen could come off the ladder and attached themselves to the arms of the electric tower or to the tower itself if they needed to. As a result of this occurrence, the lineman, Mr. Cameron Alley, fell with the ladder from the electric tower to the ground as he was being moved to another location on the same electric tower with a ladder;

- where the ladder was attached to a grapple, and
- the grapple to a long line that is also attached to the belly of the helicopter; and

the lineman survived the incident with serious injuries.

Lineman, Mr. Russ Marion was the only and the second person in addition to Mr. Cameron Alley (falling lineman) on the tower, and Mr. Russ Marion is the first hand witness to this occurrence.

Conducted the interview via phone at [REDACTED], starting at 1335 pm. Person on the phone identified himself to be Mr. Russ Marion, DOB: [REDACTED], with address at [REDACTED]. Metamora, MI 48435; working for ARC, a power line restoration company based at Indiana. Mr. Marion stated that he arrived at Puerto Rico on 16 October 2017 and had been working since his arrival. Mr. Marion has about 20 years of experience in power line restoration work. He also has experience with long line work with helicopter. The day of the incident, all involved for the day's activities received a "tailboard" (he defined it as pre-job briefing) in the beginning of the morning shift. Due to bees present at the location of the electric tower, both linemen, Mr. Russ Marion and Mr. Cameron Alley were wearing bee suits while doing their work at the electric tower. This is the first time they had ever worn bee suits in connection with their job. The head cover of the bee suit was marked with a "+" sign (via black electric tape) to serve as signal to the pilot with head moves. Mr. Marion stated that throughout the day, helicopter moved linemen with the ladder to various locations on the electric towers. In each of the instances where the helicopter moved the ladder, helicopter also moved the lineman with the

ladder, and A-frame was used at all times when personnel was moved with equipment and ladder. In the last instance of moving the ladder with the lineman, a grapple was used, instead of A-frame. The nature of attachment of lineman and ladder was described as "lineman connected to the ladder, and the ladder was connected to one of the arms of the electric tower" while they work on the electric towers. At some point in their work flow, the linemen were having "tough time" getting a cable into position – that is to put the electric cable on the arm of the tower where it is supposed to be located and pinned in its place. Both linemen were working on the ladder on the side of the electric tower where the cable needed to be lifted and placed on the arm of the tower. The 16-foot ladder with two linemen on it was creating obstruction in their work area, not allowing space to work with. They made the decision to call the helicopter to move the ladder out of the way; however, since lineman Cameron Alley always worked on the ladder, when the ladder was moved, the lineman Cameron Alley had to move with it. One side of the electric tower has 3 arms extending out, and the other side has only two arms extending out from the tower. Mr. Cameron Alley was on the bottom arm on the side of the tower with 2 arms. Mr. Cameron Alley (falling lineman) called in for the helicopter. At this time, Mr. Russ Marion came off the ladder, and attached himself to the electric tower arm, remained on the arm of the electric tower. According to Mr. Russ Marion observations, the helicopter moved into position and picked up the ladder with lineman Cameron Alley on it, and moved them (lineman and the ladder) to the top arm of the tower on the same side of the tower as they were before this initial move (the 2 arm side). They hoped that this move of the ladder further up on the tower would provide enough workspace. They noticed that the workspace was still not enough, so they decided to move the ladder with the lineman to the opposite side of the tower where there are 3 arms extending, and placed the ladder and lineman on the top arm. The lineman Cameron Alley and ladder stayed on the top arm. Next, the helicopter proceeded to pick up the cable and placed it on the lower arm of the electric tower (on the 2-arm side of the tower) **with long line and grapple.** (It is important to note that the cable is placed on an arm below the second arm of the tower on the side with 2 arms. This additional electric arm is not of concrete material. It may appear in photos as a concrete arm, but it is not. For the interview purposes, the tower arms refer to the concrete arms that are part of the tower structure itself). Next, helicopter proceeded to pick up the lineman, Mr. Cameron Alley and the ladder and wanted to move both (lineman and the ladder simultaneously) back to the lower arm of the electric tower on the 2-arm side. Mr. Marion stated that the pilot did not swap the grapple with A-frame to pick up the ladder together with the lineman. The helicopter moved into position to pick up the ladder with the lineman on it. **Even though the ladder (with lineman on it) was attached to the grapple of the helicopter, the lineman remained attached to the arm of the electric tower at the time when the helicopter started to pull.** As the helicopter was pulling upward, the linemen were shaking their heads to signal to the pilot that lineman was not ready for the pull yet (because he was still connected to the tower's arm). At that time, the lineman reached out and disconnected himself from the tower's arm. In the meantime, the helicopter started to descend (reversing the pull). In the process of descending with lineman on the ladder, the base of the ladder touched the arm of the tower. At this time, the ladder was no longer descending as the base of ladder was resting on the arm of the tower. Further descent of the helicopter with the long line attached to it while the base of the ladder was in contact with the arm of the electric tower restricting its further descent, the ladder got disconnected from the grapple, and lineman began to fall on his back with the ladder on top of him to the ground. Mr. Marion stated that he was never the signal man to the pilot, and he did not give any signal to the pilot with his head moves to signal to the pilot that he could start the pull the ladder and the lineman.