

10- ATTACHMENT: Witness Narrative by Steve Hansler

Narrative on Martin Ranch Incident

At 0103 Hrs. on 10/23/08 while assigned to the Cajon Fire (BDU Inc. #11627) on engine 3580, I was dispatched to a new fire start in the Devore area. I was on mop up and patrol on the west side of Interstate 15 at Kenwood Avenue. As I approached the incident it looked like access to the fire would be from Cable Canyon Road, so that's the way I went. Just past the KOA campground, I ran into an oncoming pick-up that I initially thought might have been fleeing the scene and possibly responsible for the fire's origin. I pulled in front of the speeding vehicle and it ended up being a battalion chief from the San Bernardino County Fire Department who told me that access would have to be from Little League Drive, so I turned around and headed back out to the freeway. I headed north on Little League Drive and turned west on Meyers Rd. and ran into fire just north of Martin Ranch Rd. and threatening structures. This was at approximately 0126 hrs. There were two San Bernardino City Fire Department engines that I saw sitting on a structure apiece. I drove northwest through the black in attempt to get to the other side of the fire to attempt some type of control action. From what I could see, the fire was approximately 15-20 acres in size and being pushed by a steady 25 MPH Santa Ana wind with much higher gusts. I found a road that I thought might get me were I wanted to go but there were power lines above the road being swayed by a vigorous wind that I didn't want to get under. So I turned around and headed back out to Martin Ranch Road and proceeded north where the fire had blown through leaving burning eucalyptus trees showering sparks everywhere. Driving north, I spotted the eaves and part of the roof of a structure on fire and backed up and headed into the driveway and had my crew pull a line to put the house out (I DON'T REMEMBER THE ADDRESS) At the same time, the structure right next door had burning material on the roof and I pulled a line over there to put it out. There were no other engines in the area. About five or ten minutes later an engine from the county entered the driveway to give me a hand and I told them that we had these two houses covered and to look elsewhere for other similar situations. Burning eucalyptus trees were surrounding these structure and we spent at least an hour on them and went through two tanks of water before I felt it was safe to leave them and seek another assignment. By this time, the incident was being handled by several agency reps and I ended up working for BC Andrew Bennett for the rest of the incident.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Hansler
Fire Captain

10- ATTACHMENT: Witness Sherri Davignon Statement**WITNESS INFORMATION**

W-5 DAVIGNON, Sherri

San Bernardino CA 92407

Home Phone

W-5 DAVIGNON approached me on October 25, 2007, at about 9:30 a.m., while I was in front of 1701 Martin Ranch Road examining the area. Her residence was located and it was the first house northeast of 1701 Martin Ranch Road. I identified myself as the fire investigator and asked her if she was home when the fire occurred, and if the power to her house had been on. She provided the following information.

She and her family had been asleep when the police came to her home at 2:46 a.m., and told her family to evacuate because of the fire. She was not aware of the fire until that time. She said the electrical service had gone out on Sunday, October 21, 2007, and the power had come on and gone off intermittently. She said it had been off when she retired for the night before the fire started.

10- ATTACHMENT: Witness Mary Jo Kelly Statement**WITNESS INFORMATION**

W-6 KELLY, Mary Jo

San Bernardino CA 92407

Home Phone

On October 25, 2007, at about 1:30 p.m., I saw W-6 KELLY standing in her driveway. I approached her, and identified myself as a fire investigator and asked if she was home during the fire, and if the power to her home had been on or off. She provided the following information.

It was her recollection that sometime during the day on Sunday, October 21, 2007 the electrical power had gone off for several hours, and then it came back on around 6:00 p.m. that evening. The power went out again at about 9:00 pm, and then came back on at about 2:00 a.m. Monday morning. At about 11:00 a.m. on Monday morning the power was off again, and she and her husband left their home to stay at another location. She was not home when the Martin Fire started, but became aware there was a fire from her groundskeeper who had called her to tell her about the fire. She said the power had been restored to her residence that day at about 11:00 a.m.

In closing W-5 Kelley referred me to Monica Soares who lived at the next house up the road saying she had information about the fire. She had no further information, and I concluded the interview.

10- ATTACHMENT: Witness Monica Soares Statement**WITNESS INFORMATION**

W-7 SOARES, Monica

San Bernardino CA 92407

Home Phone

On October 25, 2007, at about 1:45 p.m., I made contact with W-7 SOARES who was inside her primary home at _____ Road. I identified myself as a fire investigator and told her I had been referred to her by her neighbor. I asked her if she had been home at the time of the fire, and had her electrical power been on or off. She provided the following information.

She said she and her husband were at their house next door. They owned the home at _____ Road, and they also owned a secondary home located next door to the _____ on the same side of the road. Electrical power had been out to both houses for some time. They had been in the secondary home and the light in the room illuminate momentarily. She estimated it was on for less than one minute. When the power turned back off, she and her husband decided to return to the primary house. She estimated the time was sometime between 12:30 and 12:45 a.m. They arrived at their _____ and they pulled into their driveway facing north and got out of their vehicle to go into the house. There was no indication of fire at that moment. Within a few minutes of arriving at the house, she went into her bedroom and looked out her window that faces north. She saw the hillside behind her house, in the direction of the dome house, was on fire and estimated the length of the fire was 60 feet long. The fire burned behind her house and embers were striking the back of the house. She dialed 9-1-1 and reported the fire, and then she notified her neighbor by phone, and soon after evacuated the area.

In closing, W-7 SOARES referred me to her neighbor Marlene Evans who lived in the house _____ Martin Ranch Road. She had no further information, and I concluded the interview.

10- ATTACHMENT: Witness Marlene Evans Statement**WITNESS INFORMATION**

W-8 EVANS, Marlene

San Bernardino CA 92407
Home Phone

On October 25, 2007, at about 2:00 p.m., I arrived at seeking out W-8 EVANS. When she met me at the end of her driveway I identified myself as a fire investigator, and told her W-7 SOARES suggested I come talk to her.

W-8 EVANS provided the following information. She said the electrical power at her home had been off. She happened to be outside her residence and had noticed a vehicle driving slowly up the road (towards the north) and when it got to the area past her house where there was an open gate, the car turned around and drove back the way it had come in. She could only describe the vehicle as a small car. Approximately 20 minutes later she smelled smoke, and when she went outside to seek the source and was standing at the edge of her swimming pool she could see fire burning in the area where the car had turned around earlier. Additionally she handed me a portion of a one-dollar bill that was burned around its edges saying she had found it in the same area where she saw the fire burning.

She had no further information, and I concluded the interview. After examining the piece of one-dollar bill I returned it to her.

10- ATTACHMENT: Witness Paul Pimentel Telephone Interview**WITNESS INFORMATION**

W- 9 PIMENTEL, Paul

Employer: Southern California Edison

Address: PO Box 900, 2244 Walnut Grove Ave. Rosemead CA 91770

Phone: (626) 302-5830 / PAX 25830

Cell Phone: (626) 695-4705

On October 30, 2007, at about 2:24 p.m., I spoke with W-9 PIMENTEL over the telephone to discuss the Cajon and Martin fires. I told him I had investigated the Martin fire, and I detailed for him the observations I had made at the fire's area of origin and witness information I had received regarding the power coming on momentarily for less than one minute sometime between 12:30 a.m. and 12:45 a.m., on October 23rd. I told him I had also talked SCE employees W-2 WARD and W-3 VERKCAIK when I first arrived at the scene of the downed conductor. I told him I had located two areas of burned spots under the downed conductor and was curious about how the circuit breakers worked, and asked if the circuit breakers could cycle back on once or twice after they had originally tripped. I also told him I had flagged the area burn indicators for visual reference, and the indicators showed the fire had come from the area of the downed conductor. PIMENTEL said he had met VERKCAIK at the site on Friday, October 23, 2007, and was told by VERKCAIK I had been at the scene and I had set up a perimeter around the downed conductor. VERKCAIK provided additional information to PIMENTEL, and he gave me that information during our telephone conversation.

W-9 PIMENTEL said "a relay is a mechanism or devise used to control a circuit breaker at a sub station. If there is any type of short circuit, or what can be called a fault out on the circuit, and that would be like if the conductors got together in the wind, or something took the conductor to ground, like a tall ladder or a crane touching it, all of a sudden something is different with the circuit, so it's a short circuit or fault. So the relay at the sub-station will sense there is a fault, and depending on how it is set up, and I'm not an electrical engineer, but this is what I have gleamed over the years, depending on what the settings are on the relay if it gets over a certain amount of time or over a certain amount of amps the relay says OK, I need to open the circuit breaker. Then the circuit breaker opens, and the power stops flowing out of the sub-station on that circuit. So that's what a relay is. And then at the sub-station what we have is... sometimes it can be... lets say a tree branch gets blown into the conductor, and they go phase to phase, and there's a short circuit, so it interrupts the circuit because the relay says "O.K., there's a fault", and opens up the circuit breaker. When the tree limb clears itself, or what ever was causing the problem clears itself, it automatically will re-close the circuit breaker, and the circuit breaker energizes the circuit. If there's no further problem out on the circuit the circuit will stay energized. Sometimes that can be like after a half-minute, minute, or two minutes depending on what the settings are. I don't know if you ever experienced when

the power goes off briefly and then comes back on, but that's called the circuit test and it just test to make sure the circuit is good. If the circuit is bad, and the fault comes back, the relay will say, "O.K. there's a problem" and the circuit breaker will open up again. Tom Verkcaik, my troubleman, mentioned to me what we have is out on the circuit also is what's called an R.A.R. which is like a circuit breaker, but it's not at the sub-station, but its out on the circuit. We had opened up that R.A.R. because there had been wind related damage done to that circuit earlier the day prior, and so the power had been out for a while. And then after the crew had cleared the area and made the repairs, they re-energized it at about 12:40 or so in the morning, and it was dark and the area where you found it I think was 1701 Martin Ranch Road. Well what happened is we patrolled that circuit earlier, and there was no problem at that pole. So once the crew was out there on the circuit they were making repairs at different locations I guess this conductor came down in the wind also, and nobody knew. And so at about 12:40 a.m. or so, when they decided to energize that circuit, with the conductor on the ground, it's going to create a short circuit of fault. What happened was it was on briefly, and then the relay said O.K. there's a problem, so it opened and de-energized. So, that is what I have so far, so that's probably what the ignition of that particular fire was. We had a conductor down, but we didn't know and when we energized that section, with the conductor on the ground, that's not a good thing to happen, and the winds were blowing like mad."

We concluded our phone call at about 2:52 p.m.

10- ATTACHMENT: Witness Laurie Kelley Statement**WITNESS INFORMATION**

W-10 KELLEY, Laurie

Address:

Home Phone

Cell Phone:

On February 25, 2008, at about 3:35 p.m., I made contact with W-10 KELLEY at her dome house located at _____ I identified myself as the fire investigator for the Martin Fire and asked her if she had been home at the time the fire started. She provided the following information.

She said she was out of the area when the fire had started. Her daughter had left for work before the fire started because she worked the night shift. When her daughter tried to return home the next morning, she could not get back to the house due to the fire and the area being closed off. Several days later her daughter returned home. W-10 KELLEY said she was at the house preparing for her son's October 27th wedding, and she was not sure of the exact date, but either before, or just after the wedding, and within a week of the fire, a person came to her house on Martin Ranch Road and he identified himself as a Southern California Edison investigator. She could not remember the individual's name, but the reason he came to the house was to ask if she would mind the power being turned off because SCE had to perform work on the electrical service next to her house. She told him it was alright, and the work was done the following day. During her conversation with the individual he told her the fire was caused by the power lines when they fell to the ground, and he pointed out to her the general area where the fire started. She pointed out the same area to me when I interviewed her. She said he also had mentioned something about a transformer, but she could not remember the details.

I asked W-10 KELLEY about the stump located on the edge of the driveway on the opposite side of the tree, and if she recalled if it had been cut before the fire, and she said it had been. She cut the branches that would grow out of it, so the base of the tree would not get larger and lift up the cement driveway. She discarded the branches she cut on the opposite side of the driveway just south of pole # 2137612E.

W-10 KELLEY had no further information, and I concluded my interview at about 3:55 p.m.