

Satellite Dish Move

We'd built a first-rate satellite system. We were the first land-line-free network in America. The original installation was at "the farm" near Marion, Mo. So as we were building the new building, Charlie Peters got FCC permission to locate this high-powered up-link at our new building in Jefferson City. The question was: how best to move it. There were several choices:

1. Tear it down and rebuild it at the new site
2. Load it onto a truck bed and move it on surface streets
3. Hire a helicopter firm specializing in this and move it.



Tearing it down was expensive and time consuming. The ten-meter dish couldn't be moved on surface streets because of height and width restrictions. So, we chose the helicopter. Meantime crowds had gathered in Jefferson City to watch. News teams were there. There was great anticipation. My son, Matt, was part of the team at Marion and [filmed the event](#).

[Memo from Clyde](#) the following week (7/3/89)

May 6, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Staff
FROM: Clyde 
DATE: July 3, 1989
SUBJECT: Various

1. Last Monday's disaster was a setback for us. From a time standpoint it puts us behind our schedule by a month. From a cost standpoint we are unsure of our damage. We are unsure because we do not know the timing or the amount of insurance proceeds. Let me plainly and clearly itemize the facts about the accident that we are aware of at this time. We began making plans over a year ago to transfer the primary uplink facility for our networks from its location near Marion, Missouri, to our new building on Hobbs Road. We had several options. We could completely dismount and disassemble the dish load in on a transport truck and move the disassembled dish to the new site. The second option was to move the dish on a truck without dismantling. That option was not workable because of the width of the dish and its size. It just simply would not fit on any truck and could not be moved over the narrow highway and under the rather low telephone lines crossing the highway. That option was impossible. A third option was air transport. Air transport proved to be nearly half as expensive as disassembling and so that was the method chosen. The antenna manufacturer suggested that alternative to us and instructed Charlie Peters on the exact procedure and suggested the name of the helicopter company. We followed the specifications of the manufacturer and the helicopter company to the letter but obviously something went wrong. The investigation into what happened will be fully conducted by the insurance companies, the helicopter company and the manufacturer of the dish. My investigation indicates no wrong doing on the part of anyone on our staff. We followed all of the instructions. Obviously with an accident of this type there comes a mental setback for us all. There is a great deal of remorse and pain involved with it. Everyone needs to understand that despite the best intentions of everyone accidents happen, mistakes are made, but we must press on. Nothing great in life is ever accomplished without effort and without opportunity for failure. One blessing is that little damage was done and no one was hurt. We'll take some ribbing about this accident for a number of years and let's enjoy it. At the same time let's press on to bigger and greater things. A revised timetable for activities relating to engineering is attached for your review.