

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

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ERA HELICOPTERS, LLC *

AIRBUS HELICOPTER CRASH NEAR * Accident No.: ANC16LA022

JUNEAU, ALASKA, MAY 5, 2016 *

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Interview of: SARAH LOWELL
Juneau Base Manager
Era Helicopters, LLC

Era Helicopters Juneau Base
Juneau, Alaska

Friday,
May 6, 2016

APPEARANCES:

CORY THERIOT, Vice President
Safety and Quality Assurance
Era Helicopters, LLC

LARRY LIPPERT, Director of Operations
Era Helicopters, LLC

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I N T E R V I E W

MR. THERIOT: All right. This is Cory Theriot, investigation of November-194-Echo-Hotel, accompanied by Larry Lippert, Director of Operations for Era.

INTERVIEW OF SARAH LOWELL

BY MR. THERIOT:

Q. And if you could state your name?

A. Sarah Lowell.

Q. And position?

A. Juneau base manager.

Q. And how long have you been employed with Era?

A. Juneau base manager since 2014.

Q. And just, can you let us know where you were during the time of the accident?

A. I was down in our com room, or what we refer to as our dispatch, where the radios and phones are.

Q. And at that time, what were you doing at that time?

A. I was training a new employee on how to put up our schedule board for the cruise line.

Q. Okay. From there, what is the next steps once any type of notification, if you could start from there?

A. Well, I was training Courtney, and we also had Wayne Whitlock and Nate Williamson in the room as well. And we, over the radio, heard from our dogsled camp manager, Alex, that there was an aircraft accident and he was rendering first aid.

1 Q. So did you know what the environmental conditions were at the
2 time?

3 A. Meaning weather?

4 Q. Yes.

5 A. Just from what we saw outside, you know, overcast, rainy,
6 scattered clouds, I guess, misty.

7 Q. Okay. So -- and if you could take us from the time that you
8 started the notification process and walk us through that, what
9 you did?

10 A. Okay. We received the initial report at 1408. I, at 1409,
11 called our com center down in Lake Charles to notify them of an
12 aircraft accident. Quickly then called the Coast Guard around
13 1414, and they had already had our ELT ping so they were aware of
14 something going on. And then I did call Temsco. I did not get an
15 answer. It was a no-ship day, which meaning they probably weren't
16 there because they weren't doing flight-seeing flights.

17 And so then I called 9-1-1. 9-1-1 was going to get rescue
18 crew here, and I let them know that the backboard would not fit in
19 our helicopters, so they then contacted Temsco themselves and took
20 over that, getting Temsco prepared.

21 And all in this process, as well, we called our VPs, Paul
22 White, Stu Stavley, Larry Lippert, Cory Theriot, and some other
23 people -- Gabe Johnson, our regional operations manager, all
24 during this process as well. And then we contacted the Coast
25 Guard just to see if they were going to send their aircraft out of

1 Sitka. They did say that they sent their aircraft, and it was
2 going to come sit in Juneau while Temsco was going to take the
3 lead on the rescue and recover.

4 We continued contact with Lake Charles and Safety throughout
5 this whole process. I believe Temsco finally departed their base
6 around 1503 is when they departed, and I continued to keep
7 everybody else contacted on Temsco's arrival at the crash site
8 around 1523.

9 We then -- we did launch an aircraft from here. We launched
10 195 Echo-Hotel with Mike Bury to go up there and to try to get out
11 the dogsled camp staff. 195 did end up just sitting at the toe of
12 the Norris while Temsco was still in there because the weather was
13 very misty and low-visibility.

14 I believe Temsco did depart 194, again, at around 1523 and
15 landed at the airport -- sorry -- landed at the hospital around
16 1624. We dispatched Josh Barchers, who was a pilot -- who is a
17 pilot, flight-seeing pilot, and Poulae Golletis (ph.), who is our
18 tour supervisor, to go to the hospital and meet the Temsco
19 helicopter at 1540. So they were there before the aircraft
20 landed.

21 We continued to contact and keep in contact with our com
22 center down in Lake Charles, Larry Lippert, as well as Mandy
23 Nelson, our flight-seeing manager, Gabe Johnson, and Cory Theriot,
24 on events as they unfolded when the Temsco helicopter landed back
25 at the hospital, when 195 landed back at base here without the dog

1 crew; he was unable to get up to the dogsled camp.

2 I went to the hospital at -- I arrived at the hospital at
3 1900 and saw Jiri and his girlfriend, Laura, load the ambulance,
4 and then they left around 1910, 1915.

5 Q. Any conversations or statements with the pilot at that time?

6 A. Negative, no.

7 Q. Okay.

8 MR. LIPPERT: I'm sorry. Did you say that you followed the
9 company ERP?

10 MS. LOWELL: I did. We had the ERP manual out, yes.

11 MR. LIPPERT: Okay. Just wanted to make sure. I didn't hear
12 that, so --

13 MR. THERIOT: Okay. All right. Do you have any further
14 questions? Okay. No further questions.

15 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: ERA HELICOPTERS, LLC
AIRBUS HELICOPTER CRASH NEAR
JUNEAU, ALASKA, MAY 5, 2016
Interview of Sarah Lowell

ACCIDENT NO.: ANC16LA022

PLACE: Juneau, Alaska

DATE: May 6, 2016

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed
to the best of my skill and ability.

A black rectangular redaction box covering a handwritten signature.

Danielle VanRiper
Transcriber