

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: MICHAEL BURY
 Juneau Lead Pilot
 Era Helicopters, LLC

Era Helicopters Juneau Base
 Juneau, Alaska

Monday,
 May 9, 2016

APPEARANCES:

CORY THERIOT, Vice President
Safety and Quality Assurance
Era Helicopters Juneau Base

LARRY LIPPERT, Director of Operations
Era Helicopters, LLC

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I N T E R V I E W

MR. THERIOT: So statement -- today's date is -- what's the date, 9th?

MR. LIPPERT: Ninth.

MR. THERIOT: May 9th. This is a statement for November-194-Echo-Hotel, witnessed by Cory Theriot and Larry Lippert, Era Helicopters.

INTERVIEW OF MICHAEL BURY

BY MR. THERIOT:

Q. Can you state your name?

A. Michael Bury.

Q. Position with the company?

A. Lead pilot for the Juneau base.

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

A. Since 2004. This would be my 13th season.

Q. Okay. Can you give us a general statement of that day, how the day began, and any type of interaction with the pilot prior to take-off?

A. Sure. We came into work that morning, and Jiri was looking at the weather, talking up to Dog Road. And weather wasn't good to get up there, so everybody at that point, all the pilots, we got together upstairs to do some training. And did training, took a break here and there. And a little bit before 1:00, I was speaking with Jiri and asked him -- and stated to him if the weather's not -- if we don't have the minimums, go sit on the toe

1 of the Norris Glacier. And he's in communication with Dog Road
2 there, and he said he would let me know before he goes, before he
3 departed.

4 And about that time, we took a break. I had to go out to the
5 little hangar to unload some dog food and was out there doing
6 that. And then Wayne Whitlock came out and told me to come into
7 dispatch because they had called down and reported the accident.
8 And then, from there, we just took over and dispatched to get the
9 calls out to all the right people.

10 Q. So at the time of the call, what were you doing at the time?

11 A. At the time of the exact call down, I was over in the little
12 hangar beside the main hangar, unloading the dog food off of a
13 truck. And yeah, Wayne came out and notified me that there was an
14 accident up at Dog Road with 194.

15 Q. Okay. So from the time that you were notified, what was the
16 next steps after that?

17 A. As soon as I was notified, I ran over to dispatch, and we
18 were in communication with Dog Road, and I believe Alex was just
19 out at the scene. I was calling Gabe Johnson at the time and
20 reaching out to him to inform him, because I knew Nate was making
21 some phone calls. I believe at that time he was calling Larry.

22 And I think Sarah was -- yeah, Sarah was calling down to Lake
23 Charles to inform them. And I had to -- she was on the intercom,
24 and there might have been some terminology that they just didn't
25 understand, so I had informed Lake Charles that there was indeed

1 an accident. I believe their flight following was indicating that
2 the aircraft was still in flight, which it wasn't because we had
3 received clearly that the aircraft had indeed crashed up at Dog
4 Road.

5 Q. Okay. So after initial notifications were done, what was the
6 next activities?

7 A. Just kind of all -- we were all gathered up in dispatch just
8 trying to work through all this, and just make all the right phone
9 calls and get all that taken care of and kind of wait to see -- I
10 had -- I spoke with Gabe Johnson, and he informed me to go ahead
11 and go up to the site to see if there could -- if I could assist
12 in any way.

13 I looked at the weather, and the cameras were -- the FAA
14 website cameras and the camera over at Dorothy Lake Project looked
15 fine, so I proceeded to go out and get the aircraft ready. I was
16 just about ready to start up, and then Wayne came out and told me
17 to stand down due to the fact that the police department, the
18 research -- the recovery team or search and rescue team didn't
19 want us to go up at that point because the Temsco aircraft would
20 be departing soon.

21 A few minutes later, several minutes later, I came back
22 inside. We were in dispatch. At that point in time, 10 minutes,
23 15 minutes later maybe, Temsco had departed to go up to Dog Camp.
24 At that time I called Gabe back and asked him if he would like me
25 to depart at that time. He instructed me to do so.

1 Again, myself and Michael Cook, another pilot, came with me.
2 We went out, got in the aircraft, flew up there, got up the river,
3 went over the ridge, Salisbury, at 2500 feet, proceeded up the
4 river, 2500 feet, went up to Dog Camp -- or went up to Norris
5 Glacier.

6 And it looked -- the ceiling looked pretty low. There was a
7 lot of misty rain going through, and I didn't want to go up there
8 or get even anywhere near it because I wasn't sure when Temsco
9 would be coming out of there. So I proceeded back down to the toe
10 of the Norris Glacier and landed there and closed my flight plan
11 and sat and waited for probably about 25 minutes. Didn't hear
12 from Temsco. So at that time, I started back up, hovered up the
13 Norris and then made communications with Temsco as they were just
14 departing the area.

15 Spoke to the pilot. I asked if it -- what it looked like to
16 get in there. He said it was very misty, it would take some work
17 to get in there. At that time I proceeded to go up the right side
18 of the Norris, where there was -- the ceiling was probably 900
19 feet, I guess. Visibility was greater than 3 miles, but I could
20 not see over the Guardian Mountain. So at that time I proceeded
21 to come back down the glacier, and decided not to go up there and
22 came back and landed at base.

23 Q. Okay. Anything else once you arrived back at base?

24 A. No. I think it was just -- coming back here, we landed, and
25 we were just in communication with the hospital at that time.

1 Josh Barchers and Poulae (ph.) went over to the hospital, and we
2 were just kind of getting updates on Jiri's condition.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. And that's about the extent.

5 Q. All right. All right. Thank you.

6 (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 Michael Bury

ACCIDENT NO.: ANC16LA022

PLACE: Juneau, Alaska

DATE: May 9, 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.



Danielle VanRiper
Transcriber