



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Office of Aviation Safety
Washington, D.C. 20594

July 1, 2019

Interview Summaries

ANC18FA063



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Noreen Price
Aviation Accident Investigator
Alaska Regional Office

Date: August 8, 2018
Persons Interviewed: William Janus, pilot K2 Aviation
NTSB Accident Number: ANC18FA063

Narrative:

Mr. Janus is a K2 Aviation pilot who was at the base office when the accident involving N323KT DHC-2 occurred in Denali National Park on August 4, 2018. He was interviewed at a K2 Aviation hangar by NTSB IIC Shaun Williams. Also present at the interview were NTSB investigator Noreen Price, FAA Air Safety Inspector (ASI) Charlie Gillespie, FAA ASI Greg Varner, K2 station Chief Pilot Chris Wilson, and attorney Robert Richmond. This is a summary of the interview.

- Mr. Janus is a K2 seasonal pilot, and this is his second summer with K2 Aviation. He is a pilot in command on the DHC-2 Beaver and PA-31 Navajo airplanes. He received his initial training along with the accident pilot the previous year.
- On the evening of the accident, Mr. Janus was at the K2 Aviation base office after his morning flight in a Navajo. At about 1800, he noticed that there was a sudden flurry of activity and then Tammy handed him the phone. Craig Layson, the accident pilot, was speaking on the airplane's (N323KT) satellite phone from the accident scene.
 - "Craig, this is Billy"
 - "We've run into the side of a mountain. Do you know where I am?"
 - "Yes, we have you on the satellite tracker. We're coming to get you. Here's Jeremiah."
- Mr. Janus then handed the phone to Jeremiah, who was the flight follower.
- He stated that the conversation was very brief, and Craig sounded a little distant and scratchy, just like a sat phone transmission, but he did sound like he had adrenalin

pumping. Craig did not mention the passengers or injury level during his brief interchange.

- Mr. Janus recalled that the weather in the park earlier that day was nice, about 8,000 ft ceiling, winds 20 to 25 knots up high with some bumps.

The end.



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Noreen Price
Aviation Accident Investigator
Alaska Regional Office

Date: August 8, 2018
Persons Interviewed: William Murrish, pilot K2 Aviation
NTSB Accident Number: ANC18FA063

Narrative:

Mr. Murrish is a K2 Aviation pilot who was flying in Denali National Park at the time of the accident involving N323KT DHC-2 that occurred on August 4, 2018. He was interviewed at a K2 Aviation hangar by NTSB IIC Shaun Williams. Also present at the interview were NTSB investigator Noreen Price, FAA Air Safety Inspector (ASI) Charlie Gillespie, FAA ASI Greg Varner, K2 station Chief Pilot Chris Wilson, and attorney Robert Richmond. This is a summary of the interview.

- Mr. Murrish is a K2 Aviation DHC-2 Beaver pilot who flew an aerial tour with 6 passengers in the same area that the accident flight was conducted on the evening of August 4, 2018.
- Mr. Murrish's flight was about 15-20 minutes ahead of the accident flight (N323KT). The route he flew was not a company route, but rather a route he worked out to provide the best tour experience under the weather constraints, which is typical of K2 flights. After departing Talkeetna Airport, he flew up the Tokositna Glacier, past Mount Goldie to Second shot, up to the Kahiltna Ice Fall, then down to Triple Crown notch and returned to Talkeetna Airport.
- Mr. Murrish communicated with the accident pilot, Mr. Layson, on the company frequency while passing him in N323KT near Second Shot. Mr. Layson's airplane was flying up Second Shot so Mr. Murrish decided to go to Triple Crown instead. While passing each other, Mr. Layson said "I'm at your 3 o'clock." Mr. Murrish replied, "I've got ya."

- Mr. Murrish observed that the weather in the area was relatively open over the Kahiltna Glacier. South Hunter's Pass was cloudy, but not completely closed. Some clouds were present in the area of the accident. He could not see the top of Thunder Mountain. There were no significant wind or turbulence conditions. He commented that they fly where the weather is clear, vice on any predetermined route.

The end.



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Noreen Price
Aviation Accident Investigator
Alaska Regional Office

Date: August 8, 2018
Persons Interviewed: Jeremiah Nill, K2 Aviation flight follower
NTSB Accident Number: ANC18FA063

Narrative:

Mr. Nill is the K2 Aviation flight follower who was on duty at the base office when the accident involving N323KT DHC-2 occurred in Denali National Park on August 4, 2018. He was interviewed at a K2 Aviation hangar by NTSB IIC Shaun Williams. Also present at the interview were NTSB investigator Noreen Price, FAA Air Safety Inspector (ASI) Charlie Gillespie, FAA ASI Greg Varner, K2 station Chief Pilot Chris Wilson, and attorney Robert Richmond. This is a summary of the interview.

- Mr. Nill was notified by maintenance about 1800 that N323KT's emergency locator transmitter (ELT) was activated. Soon thereafter, he was handed the phone by Mr. Janus.
- Craig Layson, the accident pilot, was speaking on the airplane's (N323KT) satellite phone from the accident scene. The call was very broken
 - Mr. Nill: "Craig, can you hear me?"
 - Mr. Layson: "We need help."
 - Mr. Nill: "We're getting help. Keep the satellite phone on."
 - Mr. Layson: "I'll try."
 - The call then dropped off for unknown reason.
- Mr. Nill continued to call the airplane's satellite phone. Eventually, he was able to make a connection and he had another conversation with Mr. Layson.
 - Mr. Nill: "Are there any injuries?"

- Mr. Layson: “We are all injured. I am wedged into the front of the airplane.”
(Mr. Nill did not recall the exact wording that Mr. Layson used to describe his condition.)
- Mr. Nill: “Are there any fatalities?”
- Mr. Layson: “I’m not sure. I believe possibly two.”
- The call then dropped off for unknown reason.
- Mr. Nill estimated that the last call was about two minutes. No other voice transmissions were received.
- *The end.*



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Noreen Price
Aviation Accident Investigator
Alaska Regional Office

Date: August 8, 2018
Persons Interviewed: Daniel Rovey, pilot K2 Aviation
NTSB Accident Number: ANC18FA063

Narrative:

Mr. Rovey is a K2 Aviation pilot who was flying in Denali National Park before the accident flight involving N323KT DHC-2 that occurred on August 4, 2018. He was interviewed at a K2 Aviation hangar by NTSB IIC Shaun Williams. Also present at the interview were NTSB investigator Noreen Price, FAA Air Safety Inspector (ASI) Charlie Gillespie, FAA ASI Greg Varner, K2 station Chief Pilot Chris Wilson, and attorney Robert Richmond. This is a summary of the interview.

- Mr. Rovey is a K2 Aviation pilot who flew an aerial tour with 8 to 10 passengers in a DHC-3 turbine Otter in the same area that the accident flight was conducted on the evening of August 4, 2018.
- Mr. Rovey's flight departed Talkeetna airport about 1650 and returned about 1800. (about the time of the accident.) He was 10 minutes ahead of Mr. Murrish's flight. After departing Talkeetna Airport, he flew across the valley to Tokositna Glacier. The Mountain (Denali) was very gray and not visible from the valley. There were low clouds present on the Tokositna. He flew over the Tok ridge toward South Hunter Mountain, which had sunshine on it. Then he flew to Kahiltna Icefall, then to Second Shot, then onto Kanikula Glacier to Tok-Ruth Saddle then returned to base.
- Mr. Rovey observed that the Mountain (Denali) was visible over a solid layer of clouds at 11,000 feet that was present from the Kahiltna Icefall to Mount Hunter. He stated that Thunder Mountain was obscured by a cloud layer near the top that was continuous to

the west face of Mount Hunter. There was also a low fog layer near the base of Thunder Mountain.

The end.