



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

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Date: August 26, 2020

Persons Contacted: Jonathan Larrivee, pilot

NTSB Accident Number: ANC20LA083 Soloy Helicopters N160SH AS350B2

Narrative: Mr. Larrivee was the pilot of the helicopter that was involved in an accident on August 25, 2020, near Johnson Camp and Tuxedni Bay, Alaska. He was interviewed by telephone. This is a summary of his statements.

Mr. Larrivee had been working at the Johnson Tract mining camp, operated by HighGold Mining, located on the east side of the Alaska Range, across the Cook Inlet from Homer, since June 29. He flew the accident helicopter every day, except one. He did not have any days off since reporting to the camp. He is very familiar with the helicopter. It had no outstanding mechanical gripes. The starter shaft sheared about a month prior, so he flew a Hughes 500 for one day while it was replaced. He did a performance check recently and the numbers were in the documents with the wreckage.

Mr. Larrivee started his duty day at 0620. He conducted a preflight and sumped the main fuel tank and in-line fuel filters. The samples all looked clear and bright. He then dumped the samples into a hazardous waste can. There were no discrepancies.

He fueled the helicopter to about 45%, which equals about 70 gallons, with Jet A the evening before the accident flight. He performed one round trip (mining crew swap) that evening. The crew swap helipad was about 3 miles away from the main camp and about an 8 minute flight, at most. On the morning of the accident, he departed the main Johnson Camp helipad with 4 passengers and about 50 gallons of fuel. He dropped 2 workers off at a lower rig and then flew to the upper helipad, dropped off the remaining 2 workers. He then departed the helipad and landed at a nearby area while waiting for the 2 workers to swap out with the off going crew. When the off going crew was ready to be picked up, he departed the waiting area and made an approach, about 45° descent profile, to the helipad. At about 25 ft from the helipad, about 10 ft above the landing pad elevation, the engine simply "quit", and the airplane yawed right. Mr. Larrivee planned to autorotate to a lower level area 600 ft below. He made a 180 degree turn, lowered the collective. He stated that the helicopter was in an autorotation, but he realized that he could not make the intended landing point, and he had no choice but to pull back the cyclic and slow down. The helicopter impacted terrain pointed down the mountain about 100 ft below the helipad and slid on the skids until one skid caught a rock and the helicopter rolled over. It came to rest on the left side up on the nose at a small

construction site on the mountain side. He secured the fuel at the shut off valve, turned off the master electrical switch and checked the ELT remote switch. The ELT light was off, but the ELT was armed and transmitting. Then he released his harness and egressed. The workers who witnessed the accident ran down the mountain and assisted him. They told him that the helicopter rolled 3 times. He sustained a minor injury to a knee. He went back into the helicopter and secured the throttle. He stated that there was a mild leak at the fuel cap, but it was secured by the workers. There was no fire. His helmet was not marked or damaged, but a lower face visor had a scratch in it.

Mr. Larrivee described the helipad site as a level clearing in the side of a mining mountain with 30° incline at 2275 ft elevation. Below the helipad, the mountain had about 45° incline. The temperature was 6° C.

When asked about jet fuel quality at the mining camp, he stated that they have a very good program for ensuring fuel type and quality. He said that the fuel is flown into an airstrip at the camp and discharged into three 1000 gallon tanks. Then it is moved via mobile truck to a 1000 gallon tank at the helipad. That tank has a fuel filter system and he has never had a problem with fuel quality. He performs a visual check of the fuel from the nozzle, but not a chemical water test. The fuel samples from the helicopter were always good and contained no visible water.

He provided his commercial airmen certificate number as [REDACTED] and birth date [REDACTED], 1970.