



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Central Region – Arlington, Texas

RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Who: Albert Curnan

Date: July 28, 2014

In a telephone conversation, the Mr. Curnan stated that he had flown 4 uneventful hours on the day of the accident and had to stop to refuel. He said the operator had just purchased fuel, which had been placed into a remote, stationary fuel storage tank and this was the first time he was using fuel from that tank. Mr. Curnan pumped 25 gallons of fuel into the helicopter, then sumped the airframe fuel tank and fuel filter. He said the strained fuel was absent of water and debris. He then departed. About 12-15 minutes into the flight, when the helicopter was about 16 feet above the ground, at an airspeed of 80 miles per hour (mph), the turbine-engine lost total power. Mr. Curnan made an autorotation to a soybean field and slid about 10-15 feet into a berm. Due to the rocking motion from hitting the berm, the main rotor blade severed the tail boom.

Mr. Curnan said that he thought the engine "flame-out" was due to fuel contamination so he sumped the helicopter's airframe fuel filter and the stationary fuel storage tank after the accident. The drained fuel from both sources was dark brown with visible contaminants.

Leah D. Yeager
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board