



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
Central Region

Record of Telephone Conversation

Person Interviewed: Leo Boucher - Pilot

Date: October 27, 2014

Subject: – CEN14LA398

He was trimming trees when the accident occurred. He was going through the tree line when the engine lost power. He had about 40' left and he would have been clear of the trees.

He no longer has use of his legs and hands as a result of the accident.

He started the clock on the ground.

The helicopter burns 30 gph.

Rubber fuel cells – Don't fit tight.

There is a 20 minute light that comes on when you have 20 minutes of fuel left.

Josh gave him a 1 hour fuel check. Then another 15 minute fuel check.

The helicopter was topped off and he checked the fuel and fuel nozzle.

Pamela S Sullivan
National Transportation Safety Board
Air Safety Investigator



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Record of Telephone Conversation

Person Interviewed: Ashley Haddock – Rotor Blade – Airborne Vegetation Mgt

Date: August 1, 2014

Subject: – CEN14LA398

The helicopter is at their facility in South Carolina.

The spot tracker data showed:

Helicopter last fueled at 3:01

Last location Ping at 4:47

Stopped Recording at 4:51

Flew 1:46 minutes since fueled.

62.4 gallon tank

They always time their flights to monitor fuel consumption.

The ground crew provides a 1 hour check followed by additional 15 minute checks.

Pilot was given a fuel check from the ground crew 4 to 5 minutes prior to the accident. Pilot responded to give him 15 more minutes.

There is a low fuel light that illuminates when fuel level is less than 60 pounds (8 minutes left)

Their mechanic drained a quart of fuel from the helicopter after the accident.

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Record of Telephone Conversation

Person Interviewed: Chuck Heck - FAA

Date: August 1, 2014

Subject: – CEN14LA398

Went to the accident site Wednesday night and again on Thursday.

Pilot in serious condition. State police took a statement from the pilot.

Operator – Airborne Vegetation Management. Rotor Blade

Ashley Haddock [REDACTED]

Cell – [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Accident occurred around 1630. Pilot was clearing brush along a railroad track. There was another pilot on the ground watching.

Engine lost power – Cutting blade contacted the ground, swung over the tracks and got hung up in the trees. The helicopter then nosed down to the ground.

Tail boom separated during the accident. Tail rotor driveshaft didn't show any torsional twisting. Looks like pilot pulled all the power out before impacting the trees. Tail rotor blades and main rotor blades showed very little damage. Torque meter 120%.

No fuel spillage at the site. On Thursday the helicopter was on a flatbed. No fuel in the helicopter. Disconnected fuel line at engine and no fuel was present. Powered up helicopter and fuel gauge indicated there was no fuel in the tank. Fuel system was intact. No separated lines. There was a little bit of hydraulic fluid and oil that had come from the helicopter.

Saw is attached to the helicopter with a pole and a safety cable. There are two levers in front of the cyclic that the pilot would need to pull in order to disconnect the blade. One disconnects the

pole and the other set off some type of a charge that separates the cable. The lever for the cable had a tie wrap around it, so it is doubtful that the pilot could have pulled the lever if he had tried.

Pamela S Sullivan
National Transportation Safety Board
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