

Communication Summary

September 7, 2017

Information from: Jeffrey Arnold, CFI



Summary & Factual Information: Mr. Arnold was asked to give his recollections of his instruction flight on August 31 in reference to the airplane accident and he, in part, reported: At approximately 11:15am local time I was with a student in a Robinson R22 helicopter preparing to execute an autorotation landing to runway 15 at Indianapolis Metropolitan Airport. My student made a radio call approximately 4 miles from the field announcing our intentions to make a straight in landing on 15. As we were descending through short final an airplane began to cross the runway hold short line to take 15 while simultaneously announcing his departure over the radio. As soon as radio call ended the aircraft was just reaching the runway 15 threshold markings. I immediately made a radio call announcing that we were already on short final. The aircraft did not respond and continued to take the runway. At this point it was clear we would have to initiate a go around in order to avoid a collision. Instead of proceeding upwind and risking a collision while he was taking off, I opted to do a right 360 off of the southwest side of the approach end of 15 to ensure we would remain clear of his departure path. As we began the right 360 I made a calmly mannered radio call directed toward the aircraft explaining that it was bad practice to cut off approaching aircraft on short final. The aircraft never responded to this or any other radio calls we made. As we came back around on final after executing the right 360 I noticed a fire in the grass off of the departure end of the runway. I began to look for the departing airplane and also noted that he had not made any other radio calls announcing his departure from the pattern. At this point I realized it was pretty clear that the fire was likely the departing airplane. I immediately initiated a go around and radioed the Metro unicom instructing them to call 911 for the wrecked airplane. I then executed the rest of the go around and flew over the wreckage to try and assess the damage. I immediately landed the helicopter direct to the ramp and then called 911 again from my phone.

I did not see the airplane takeoff or wreck. Additionally, I never had two way communication with the pilot of the airplane.

I can attest that the above summary is correct to the best of my knowledge:

Edward F. Malinowski
National Transportation Safety Board
Air Safety Investigator