



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Jennifer Rodi
Air Safety Investigator
Central Region

Person Contacted: Peter Bahnson
NTSB Accident Number: CEN18LA025

Narrative:

During the conversation, Mr. Bahnson stated the following:

Mr. Bahnson was part of the ground team supporting the recovery of the loose cattle. He was driving in his vehicle on the county road south of the helicopter.

He stated that the helicopter was flying from south to north and was turning to the east. The helicopter was helping to drive the cattle towards a gate that was under the powerlines. He was not watching the helicopter at the time of the impact but saw a flash out of the corner of his eye. He looked, and the helicopter was no longer visible. He did not hear or see anything abnormal with the helicopter prior to the impact.

The weather at the time of the accident was characterized as overcast, nothing adverse, with moderate temperatures close to freezing. He stated that it was windy (but not a strong wind) with no precipitation.



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Person Contacted: Terry Jansma
NTSB Accident Number: CEN18LA025

Narrative:

During the conversation, Mr. Jansma stated the following:

Mr. Jansma was part of the ground team supporting the recovery of the loose cattle. He was on a 4-wheeler and was in the field, following behind the helicopter.

The helicopter was moving slow across the field, helping to move the cattle slowly into the adjacent field. Mr. Jansma thought he observed the tail of the helicopter hit the powerlines first followed by the main rotor of the helicopter. He did not hear or see anything abnormal with the helicopter prior to the impact. He stated that it looked and sounded like a normal helicopter.

The weather at the time of the accident was characterized as partly sunny, windy, and chilly. The wind was out of the north; the weather was not out of the ordinary.

Mr. Jansma commented that the pilot seemed very professional. He worked with the ground team to establish a plan and, up until the impact with the powerlines, the plan worked well.



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Person Contacted: Ethan McKenney
NTSB Accident Number: CEN18LA025

Narrative:

During the conversation, Mr. McKenney stated the following:

Mr. McKenney was part of the ground team supporting the recovery of the loose cattle. He was located about 150 feet south of where the helicopter crashed, riding an all-terrain vehicle. The helicopter was following the cattle and the cattle had just started to come out of the corn field.

He looked away momentarily and when he looked back he saw the helicopter “swoop up”, hit the powerlines, and then crash. He did not hear or see anything abnormal with the helicopter prior to the impact.

The weather at the time of the accident was characterized as chilly with about 10 mile-per-hour winds. The visibility was good and there was no precipitation.



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Person Contacted: Rory McKenney
NTSB Accident Number: CEN18LA025

Narrative:

During the conversation, Mr. McKenney stated the following:

Mr. McKenney was part of the ground team supporting the recovery of the loose cattle. He was in the corn field ½ mile west of the helicopter. He was sitting in his pickup truck and did not observe the initial flight path of the helicopter.

He looked up in time to see the nose of the helicopter pointing towards him. The tail of the helicopter hit the wire, followed by the main rotor of the helicopter. The helicopter fell straight to the ground. He did not hear or see anything abnormal with the helicopter prior to the impact.

The weather at the time of the accident was characterized as chilly and cloudy with good visibility and no precipitation.



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Person Contacted: Lynn Pudenz
NTSB Accident Number: CEN18LA025

Narrative:

During the conversation, Mr. Pudenz stated the following:

Mr. Pudenz was part of the ground team supporting the recovery of the loose cattle. He was located northeast of the location where the helicopter crashed. He was assisting with the process of funneling the cattle through the hole/gate in the fence, ensuring that the cattle would go through.

He stated that the group met prior to the accident flight. The pilot landed the helicopter at the farm and the group ate lunch and established a plan for the recovery of the loose cattle. He stated that the discussions included awareness and familiarization with the location of the powerlines. The pilot flew over the corn field prior to the accident to become familiar with the location of the powerlines and the location of the cattle.

Prior to the accident, Mr. Pudenz was on the telephone with the passenger on board on the helicopter to coordinate further. Following the telephone call, he observed the helicopter fly towards the powerlines, turn, and then the tail of the helicopter struck the powerlines. He did not hear or see anything abnormal with the helicopter prior to the impact.

The weather at the time of the accident was characterized as a gloomy, overcast, and crappy day. It was windy with no precipitation and good visibility.