



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Robert Gretz
Senior Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

Date: August 15, 2017
Person Contacted: Harold Hasse, FAA/FSDO, Harrisburg, PA
NTSB Accident Number: ERA17LA209

Narrative:

Mr. Hasse was interviewed via telephone. He stated that he witnessed an airframe examination on July 11, 2017 and a successful test run of the engine on July 13, 2017. No preimpact mechanical malfunctions were noted and the low fuel light illuminated when the helicopter was positioned nose-up with the remaining fuel onboard. Mr. Hasse added that approximately 7 gallons of fuel remained in each of the two fuel tanks at the time of the loss of engine power. The two fuel tanks were connected by an interconnect passage and each tank had an internal baffle. The fuel pickup was located in the right front portion of the left fuel tank.

Just prior to the loss of engine power, the helicopter was in a nose-up lifting attitude. The helicopter manufacturer planned to research nose-up attitudes as they correlate to lower fuel states.



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Narrative:

Mr. Hasse was interviewed via telephone. He stated that during the accident flight, the helicopter had been performing a long line operation, transporting a section of conductor to a landing zone. During the transport, the conductor was not completely off the ground and was being dragged over terrain. To compensate for the dragging resistance, the pilot had the helicopter in an aft or left attitude, with a higher nose-up attitude than normal flight.

Mr. Hasse further stated that the operator's risk assessment form required that the helicopter be topped off with fuel prior to and only fly for 1 hour during side pull operations, which would leave about 37 gallons of fuel remaining. At the time of the accident, the helicopter had about 14 gallons of fuel remaining. It was possible that the nose-up attitude during a long line operation could unport the fuel during a lower fuel state. After the accident, the operator amended the risk assessment form to include the same fuel requirement in long line operations as side pull operations.