



NTSB RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Peter Wentz NTSB
Eastern Region, Office of Aviation Safety (ERA)
National Transportation Safety Board

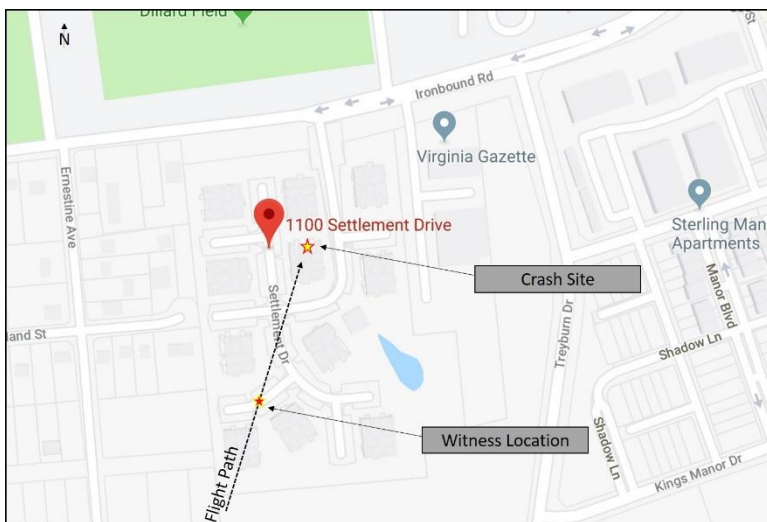
Date: 7/9/2018
Person Contacted: Paul Leslie
Contact # [REDACTED]
NTSB Accident Number: ERA18FA187

Narrative:

The following is a summary of a conversation that occurred with the individual named above:

Mr. Leslie stated he was working on his kayak in the parking lot when he heard an aircraft coming from behind him. He recalls the aircraft fly directly over his head and very low to the roof of the condominiums (about 40 feet). He stated from his position the aircraft flew a straight line to the accident site and once over the condominium wobbled and pitched nose down.

Mr. Leslie stated the aircraft was white in color and recalls the engine making a constant sound as it flew over his head.



Bain, Ken (FAA)

From: Paul Leslie [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, July 09, 2018 8:03 PM
To: Bain, Ken (FAA); [REDACTED]
Subject: Helicopter Crash Bristol Commons Complex, Williamsburg 7/8/2018

As requested, the following is our observations of the helicopter from just prior to and up to at the time of the crash:

My wife and I were in the parking lot between buildings 6 and 7 when, at approximately 4:30, we heard the sound of an aircraft engine that was apparently in distress. My wife looked up immediately and saw a white helicopter directly overhead. I joined her and we saw the helicopter lose altitude as it flew diagonally to our right. In front of building 11 it seemed to rock back and forth unsteadily and then immediately lurch to the right and dive, nose first, into the building, exploding almost instantly.

If you need any additional information from us, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Paul and Donna Leslie

[REDACTED]
Williamsburg, VA 23188
[REDACTED]

Brazy Doug

From: Grosof Erik
Sent: Tuesday, July 10, 2018 10:47 PM
To: Brazy Doug
Subject: Fwd: Williamsburg,VA helicopter crash
Attachments: 20180710_185008(0).jpg

Hi Doug. FYI from witness email.
Regards

Erik R Grosof
Senior Advisor


From: Maria Robertson 
Sent: Tuesday, July 10, 2018 19:49
To: eyewitnessreport
Subject: Williamsburg,VA helicopter crash

Hello,

My name is Maria Robertson. I am a Bristol Commons resident and I have witnessed the helicopter crash in Williamsburg, VA on Sunday, July 8.

I have attached my unprofessional drawing to easier explain my location at that time.

I was walking with my baby and my husband in between the baseball fields located behind the William & Mary buildings, close to the Kiwanis Park. He has not seen the helicopter as I asked him a question and he was looking in the other direction, giving me an answer. However, I heard a helicopter flying really low, so I looked up. I recall a helicopter flying from direction of the Richmond rd. across the Longhill rd., above the new high school area and then along the tree line next to the Ironbound rd. I thought it was really low but then as it reached the treeline, I thought to myself "oh, he got it", as it almost seemed like the helicopter got higher. (The military helicopters fly sometimes as low around here). But then it suddenly tilted sideways, away from me, nose down (maybe in about 70 degree angle) and it disappeared behind the tree line. I looked at the people on the baseball field, if they saw the same and asked them if they think it just crashed, and then we all heard a "boom" and a few seconds later saw smoke. I did not have my cell phone so people around me called 911 but they said they already got firemen dispatched. Except it flying low, it did not seem to have any smoke coming out of engine or anything unusual. The tilt itself and falling was what shocked me. My husband ran towards it thinking it landed on a soccer field, so he could help. I started to hurry back with stroller as I thought right away it hit our house.

The people at the baseball field who saw it and called 911 were from Yorktown and I hope they will report what they saw to fill in details or correct me.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions. My cell phone is 

I hope this helps a little bit.

Maria Robertson

Brazy Doug

From: Garcia Rolando
Sent: Wednesday, July 11, 2018 2:39 PM
To: Brazy Doug
Subject: FW: Williamsburg Helicopter Crash

Doug,

Another witness email for you.

Rolly

From: Kathryn Tawes [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, July 11, 2018 2:20 PM
To: eyewitnessreport <eyewitnessreport@ntsb.gov>
Subject: Williamsburg Helicopter Crash

To whom it may concern:

My name is Kathryn Tawes. I am a resident of James City County and a Business owner in the city of Williamsburg.

I saw the helicopter in the midst of it's descent and rapid disappearance behind the trees from my vantage point on Richmond Road. I believe that I may have been the first to call it into 911, based on the response of the dispatcher. My cell phone information tells me that I made the call at 4:33 p.m., and that was about 20 seconds, at most, after I saw that surreal sight. The faded black, perhaps gunmetal gray helicopter with squarish body and rounded corners looked like a toy that had been dropped by the tail. It was already in nosedive mode when I observed it. It was not spinning or shuttering. I saw it nearly in full profile. It had a rather antiquated look, certainly not slick or sleek as some. My head was already leaning out of the driver's side window. It is difficult to see the stoplight right there, because where it is makes it necessary to pull up to the road (Richmond Rd.) and that places you almost under the stoplight. I would say that from my view the helicopter was very near 11 o'clock using where Ironbound and Richmond intersect and placing the beginning of Ironbound at 12 o'clock. I drove down Ironbound Road as I was speaking to the dispatcher to get closer to where it landed, so that I could tell him more accurately. I had been parked at the stoplight directly in front of Ironbound Road on the other side of Richmond Road. The light changed just as the helicopter slipped behind the trees.

If I may assist in any other way, please feel free to contact me. My phone number [REDACTED]

Best regards,

Kathryn Tawes

Mr. Nikolas B. Kubli,

I am writing this report to you at approximately 19:10 on Sunday, July 8, 2018.

At approximately 16:25/16:30 on Sunday, July 8, 2018, I was sitting on my girlfriend's couch at [REDACTED] is directly across the parking lot from the building hit by the helicopter. I was watching the television, which is adjacent to the window. At about 16:30, I heard the blades of a helicopter whirling. The whirling was louder than normal, but my first instinct was to assume the helicopter was a military craft. However, the blades started to sound louder and louder. Over the course of about 10 seconds, it was clear that the helicopter was flying incredibly low.

I jumped up from the couch to look out the window. At that time, I saw a civilian helicopter come into view. The helicopter was white (with, possibly, blue detailing). It was leaning to its right, however, it appeared to be moving forward (i.e., not spinning uncontrollably). The top blades were turning slowly, but I could not tell if the rear blades were spinning. The helicopter hit the top of the building across the parking lot (with, what I believe, was its right landing gear), and disappeared on the other side of that building. Seconds later, I heard a "bang" and saw smoke and flames come from the other side of the building.

I ran outside of my girlfriend's building, and proceeded to the other side of the hit building. However, I saw that the flames around the building were extremely intense, and decided I could not adequately help anyone in the flames. I went back to knock on some doors in the hit building, and then proceeded to my girlfriend's building to evacuate.

If I can be of any additional assistance, please do not hesitate to ask.

Trevor N. Ward
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]