

Witness Statement

Registration # _____

Accident/Incident # _____

Witness Name: Laurie Ann Carr

Date of Birth: _____

Address: _____

Occupation/Employer: _____

Personal location at the time of the incident: _____

Please explain in your own words what you saw or heard before and/or at the time of the incident.

At Approx. 11:30am on 05/30/2020 I was removing limbs from the street in front of my home due to the thunderstorm last night and was finishing up and walking up my driveway. I heard the sound of a helicopter which I thought must have been flying very low but I didn't think much of it due to the fact that we frequently hear helicopters from Ft Rucker, AL. I looked over my left shoulder as I heard the helicopter even lower and observed the helicopter directly across the street. As I watched the helicopter I observed the pilot attempt to gain altitude and then suddenly drop. After the helicopter dropped to the street I observed a large tree or limb fall on top of the helicopter and saw lots of debris. I immediately got my husband that was mowing our lawn in the back yard of the residence and he went immediately to see if the pilot needed medical attention.

SIGNATURE / DATE: _____

05/30/2020

Witness Statement

Registration # _____

Accident/Incident # _____

Witness Name: James Carr

Date of Birth: [REDACTED]

Address: [REDACTED]

Occupation/Employer: [REDACTED]

Personal location at the time of the incident: In my back yard at the above residents

Please explain in your own words what you saw or heard before and/or at the time of the incident.

While I was cutting my grass in the back yard, I was looking
straight at where the incident happen. What I seen was the white
of the aircraft and the propeller's were not turning. I quickly
turned off the lawn mower. I ran toward the crash, once I got
there I quickly looked for anyone that was in the helicopter.
That's when I spotted the body and informed everyone to
stay away.

- The aircraft was approximately 3/4 the way up the tree.

SIGNATURE / DATE: _____

James Carr

[REDACTED]

Witness Statement

Registration # _____

Accident/Incident # _____

Witness Name: Jim Trawick

Date of Birth: 1-23-63

Address: _____

Panama City Beach FL 32407

Occupation/Employer: _____

Personal location at the time of the incident: _____

Ozark AL 36360

Please explain in your own words what you saw or heard before and/or at the time of the incident.

I was cutting grass on the side of the house when I
saw a small helicopter flying by. I heard a sputtering
and noise coming from the helicopter. The pilot started
to make a turn back in the direction he had come
from. when the engine went silent, and then
the helicopter went down rapidly to the ground.
I believe the pilot may have been trying to avoid
hitting houses when he realized he was in trouble.

SIGNATURE / DATE: _____

5-30-2020

Statement from Pyman Gholami [REDACTED] CFI

Me and Brian J. Little scheduled for a dual flight this morning at 09:00 am. Before Brian came in, I pushed the helicopter out of the hangar and did my preflight. Once Brian arrived I walked back to my office, did my final weather check and waited on Brian to finish up his preflight.

When he was done with his preflight, we went out and took off about 09:06 am. We started off with a confined area exercise including steep approach and max performance takeoff. We did two of those. After, we came back to the grass field that we have here at the flight school and I did one straight in autorotation followed by Brian doing two. We then transitioned to another field nearby and did two 180degree autorotations. We landed back at the hangar around 10:35. I did a post flight walk around and we topped it off with fuel.

We did a 1.4hour total flight and the helicopter seemed normal with all gauges in the green.

I then went in to my office and waited for Brian to finish off his preflight. Once he finished his preflight, we talked about his solo flight which would be a 1.1 flight, staying local and doing a couple normal approaches and takeoffs at our regular airport of training (Blackwell 71J) and we also had a look at the weather. He took off about 11:10 am.

I then received a phone call with the sad and shocking news at 12:37 pm.

Records show that me and Brian has had about 26.3 hours of total flight time together. Before this flight, he had 8.9 hours of solo flight and had 1.1 hours left to accomplish his 10hour solo requirement for the private pilot helicopter certificate. He was an add-on student with a fixed wing private pilot license. Records also show that he has accumulated 66.9 total hours with our flight school.

I was estimating 7 more hours of dual training flight before his checkride. We were in the planning stage of him taking a week or two off his work and do those hours daily rather than every weekend, as we have been doing so far to retain recency.

[REDACTED]



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Todd Gunther
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: May 30, 2020
Person Contacted: Frank Mayer (Flight School Owner)
NTSB Accident Number: ERA20LA197

According to Mr. Mayer, The 44 year old student was doing a helicopter add-on. The student and his instructor had done a dual flight lesson that morning, had come back to the flight school, and then refueled. The student pilot had then flown solo up to Ozark (Blackwell Field), which was about 12 minutes away from the flight school. The accident happened near the airport.



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Todd Gunther
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: June 11, 2020

Person Contacted: Investigator Justin Chadwick (Dale County Sheriff's Office)
NTSB Accident Number: ERA20LA197

According to Investigator Chadwick, he arrived on scene about 20 minutes after the accident occurred.

He stayed at the accident site for more than an hour and during that time, he observed "a lot of oil" on the ground while he was there but did not observe or smell any fuel.



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Todd Gunther
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: June 11, 2020
Person Contacted: Capt. Michael Bryan (Ozark Police Department)
NTSB Accident Number: ERA20LA197

According to Captain Bryan, He did not smell or observe any fuel on scene at the accident site either initially or during recovery of the pilot from the wreckage.



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Todd Gunther
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: June 10, 2020
Person Contacted: Pyman Gholami (Flight Instructor)
NTSB Accident Number: ERA20LA197

According to Mr. Gholami, had no personal relationship. On the day of the accident they had a dual flight lesson in the morning, and everything seemed to be normal with Mr. Little.

They were trying to get Mr. Little more flight time so that he could take his check ride, and Mr. Gholami thought he was doing well, and he believed that in a few more hours he could sign him off for the check ride.

At the flight school they would usually refuel the helicopters before putting them away in the hangar. The last time that N9421P (the accident helicopter) flew before the day of the accident, was on May 25, 2020, and it was flown by Mr. Gholami and Mr. Little during a dual lesson. Mr. Gholami was not sure who refueled during that lesson.

On the morning of the accident prior to the dual lesson, Mr. Gholami, checked the fuel when he preflighted the airplane, and then Mr. Little preflighted the airplane. Mr. Gholami noted that there appeared to be about 20 gallons of fuel in the fuel tank of the accident helicopter when he checked it.

After the dual flight lesson, they refueled the helicopter:

1. Mr. Gholami drove the fuel truck over from its parking spot
2. Mr. Gholami turned the pump on the fuel truck on.
3. Mr. Little took the nozzle from the fuel truck
4. Mr. Gholami observed Mr. little place the nozzle in the fuel tank filler of the helicopter fuel tank.
5. Mr. Gholami carried on a conversation from the driver's seat of the fuel truck, while Mr. little was fueling the helicopter.
6. Mr. Little then told Mr. Gholami; "Good to go" and gave him a "Thumbs up".

RECORD OF CONVERSATION

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7. Mr. Little then put the nozzle back on the fuel truck.
8. Mr. Gholami then turned off the pump on the fuel truck.
9. Mr. Gholami then drove away and parked the fuel truck.
10. Mr. Gholami then met Mr. Little back in the office.

Mr. Gholami did not see Mr. Little secure the fuel tank filler cap on the fuel tank filler.

Mr. Gholami advised that the fuel gauge worked on the accident helicopter, but it was not 100% accurate.

The low fuel lights also, did not work on the helicopters (The accident helicopter and on the flight school's other operable Schweizer 269 – N2074C). He was unsure but thought that the low fuel light stopped working on N2074C first.

A few months before the accident, the flight school placarded the low fuel lights on both helicopters. After the accident they removed the placard on N2074C.

Fuel (100LL) was stored at the flight school in a 1,000 gallon tank. There was no meter on the tank, and Mr. Gholami believed that there was no filter on the 1,000 gallon tank (He thought there might have been one on the pump, but he was not sure).

They would transfer fuel from the 1,000 gallon tank to the fuel truck when the fuel truck tank was empty. The fuel truck had a filter and fuel drain but also did not have a meter.

They had no set procedures for sumping the truck. They would just check it from time to time.

They would estimate the amount of fuel that was in the helicopters by using the fuel gauges and checking visually.

Mr. Gholami also advised that the flight school had a helipad and an "H" was painted on it, but they did not have an identifier.

VOLUNTARY STATEMENT

DATE 5/30/2020

TIME 12:23

M. PLACE [REDACTED]

I, Trooper Chris Ward, am 36 years old and I live at [REDACTED]

I am giving this statement to OSARK Pd I.D. [REDACTED], who has identified himself as a [REDACTED]

and he has duly warned me that I have the following rights: that I have the right to remain silent and not make any statement at all; that any statement I make may be used against me at my trial; that any statement I make may be used as evidence against me in court; that I have the right to have a lawyer present to advise me prior to and during any questioning; that if I am unable to employ a lawyer, I have the right to have a lawyer appointed to advise me prior to and during any questioning and that I have the right to terminate the interview at any time.

Prior to and during the making of the statement, I have and do hereby knowingly, intelligently, and voluntarily waive the above explained rights and I do make the following voluntary statement to the aforementioned person of my own free will and without any promises or offers of leniency or favors, and without compulsion or persuasion by any person or persons whomsoever:

I observed a helicopter over the tree line near my residence. Helicopter lost power and started spinning in the air. Then it started nose diving toward the ground. I did hear some screaming and then a loud crash sound.

I have read this statement consisting of [REDACTED] page(s), each page of which bears my signature, and I do affirm that all facts and statements contained herein are true and correct.

[REDACTED]
Signature of person making voluntary statement

The above warnings were given by and
this voluntary statement was taken by

Witness

(This must be one and the same person as named above)