

John Thomas Carey

██████████ ██████████ ██████████
Miami, Florida 33186

██████████
████████████████████
FAA Cert#: ██████████

June 29, 2020

Inspector Derrick Mayberry
Federal Aviation Administration
████████████████████

VIA E-MAIL

RE: Pilot's Official Statement

On Thursday, June 25, 2020, between the hours of 0900 and 1200, I was operating a Bell 206 L-1 Plus helicopter, with a model C30-P engine, registration number N5013G. I was performing vertical reference, long line operations with a 100-foot-long line. This assignment took place in the southwest sector of Tradewinds Park, in the City of Coconut Creek, Broward County, Florida.

The purpose was to transport construction materials, consisting of a large steel drainage pipe and several bags of rock aggregate material from a parking lot area to a work site approximately 0.2 nautical miles west of the pick-up site, in a heavily wooded and swampy area of the park.

I was near completion of my mission and in radio communication with the Load Master who was on the ground at the drop site. Prior to insertion of the load into the drop area and committing myself, I checked fuel status and aircraft systems to ensure everything was operating as normal. My fuel indication at that time was between 65 and 70 pounds, telling me that I had approximately 10 – 15 minutes of operational time remaining to complete the load.

As I was holding a hover over the drop area, the Load Master was having me hold the load at 4 feet above ground level while making subtle power/altitude changes up and down to assist the ground crew with releasing the material from the bag. As I was focusing all of my attention on the load orientation and crew below, I noticed a sound of my engine flame-out/failing and complete loss of power to maintain flight. As the aircraft began to settle, I made an emergency effort to glide to the south into the wind in an effort to take the aircraft as far as possible from the workers below.

Prior to penetration into the canopy of trees, I pulled all of the collective inertia remaining in the rotor system to assist in maintaining a level attitude. At this point, the aircraft fell approximately 100 feet into the trees, experiencing a violent impact and coming to final rest in an upright position. I remember trees breaking through the front windscreen, striking me in the face and helmet, pinning me to the headrest just before an indescribably violent impact with the ground. I instinctively rolled the throttle off, managed to perform a rapid triage of my legs and arms to make sure I could safely egress myself from the wreckage. At this point I felt severe pain in my head, neck, back and pelvis region. With the threat and fear of post-crash fire, I unbuckled my seatbelt and crawled from the wreckage as fast as possible for approximately 20 yards. I was unable to proceed further due to the excruciating pain in my back. Moments after I collapsed, I can recall being assisted by the Load Master and FAA Inspector Rick Beckstrom, to whom I gave a brief verbal statement prior to the arrival of Fire-Rescue personnel.

----- **END OF STATEMENT** -----