

FW: Witness Call re: Shamong, NJ American Eurocopter (N606HD) 12/19 (ERA24FA069)

From Rolando Garcia [REDACTED]

Date Wed 12/20/2023 10:14 AM

To Todd Gunther [REDACTED]

Hello Todd,

FYI

Rolando Garcia

Assistant Advisor - Special Operations
Office of the Managing Director (MD-5)

Desk [REDACTED]
Cell [REDACTED]

From: NTSB ROC Notification [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 9:18 AM

To: eyewitnessreport [REDACTED]

Subject: Witness Call re: Shamong, NJ American Eurocopter (N606HD) 12/19 (ERA24FA069)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



Intake Form



Call Information	
Email Recipients:	[REDACTED]
Record #	20,141
ROC Awareness Time:	2023-Dec-20 08:59 AM

Date/Time of Event:	
Event Time Zone:	(GMT-05:00) Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Call Type: Witness Call			
Caller's Name:	Terry Bonaparte		
Caller Title:		Caller Organization/Affiliation:	
Call Back #	[REDACTED]		
Call Back #2		Call back #2 Type	
Caller's Email:			
Intake Subject: Witness Call re: Shamong, NJ American Eurocopter (N606HD) 12/19 (ERA24FA069)			
Call Details - Brief Description of events: Caller lives in the Wharton State Forest. He believes he saw the helicopter go down on fire last night. Between 7:30 PM and 8 PM EST, 12/19 caller was looking out his window and noticed a "giant orange ball" go down in the forest. He thought it was from a meteor shower but learned of the crash this morning.			
Address/Location :	[REDACTED]		
Urgent		Call Back Requested:	No

Status	
Record #	20,141
Event Status:	2023-Dec-20 08:59 AM
Route To:	Other, Route to - Other: Witness Email Other Duty Officer(s) Notified :
Notes:	
Watch Officer:	[REDACTED]

NTSB

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



Outlook

FW: New Jersey Chopper 6 crash

From Rolando Garcia [REDACTED]

Date Wed 12/20/2023 11:20 AM

To Todd Gunther [REDACTED]

Todd,

One more

Rolando Garcia

Assistant Advisor - Special Operations
Office of the Managing Director (MD-5)

Desk [REDACTED]
Cell [REDACTED]

From: Michael Weissmann [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 11:06 AM

To: eyewitnessreport [REDACTED]

Subject: New Jersey Chopper 6 crash

[CAUTION] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click any links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Not sure if it would be of any interest but I did see this helicopter go down from my window last night. Please contact me if I can be of further assistance

Mike Weissmann
[REDACTED]

Fw: Witness Call; Shamong, NJ AS350 (N606HD) 12/19 (ERA24FA069)

From Erik Grosf [REDACTED]

Date Fri 12/22/2023 12:20 PM

To Todd Gunther [REDACTED]

Hi Todd,

Just an FYI form the ROC. Happy holidays!

Regards,
Erik

Erik R Grosf
Chief-Special Operations Division
NTSB HQ-DC

From: NTSB ROC Notification [REDACTED]

Sent: Friday, December 22, 2023 12:16

To: eyewitnessreport [REDACTED]

Subject: Witness Call; Shamong, NJ AS350 (N606HD) 12/19 (ERA24FA069)



Intake Form



Call Information			
Email Recipients:	[REDACTED]		
Record #	20,190		
ROC Awareness Time:	2023-Dec-22 12:03 PM		
Date/Time of Event:			
Event Time Zone:	(GMT-05:00) Eastern Time (US and Canada)		
Call Type: Witness Call			
Caller's Name:	Thomas Harding		
Caller Title:		Caller Organization/Affiliation:	
Call Back #	[REDACTED]		

Call Back #2		Call back #2 Type	
Caller's Email:			
Intake Subject: Witness Call; Shamong, NJ AS350 (N606HD) 12/19 (ERA24FA069)			
Call Details - Brief Description of events: Caller lives in Mays Landing, NJ and believes he saw 2-3 huge military A/Cs overhead in the area at about 8 PM EST, 12/19. Caller said that the flight pattern of military A/Cs put them in the direction of the crashed helicopter, as he is used to them passing over his home regularly.			
Address/Location :	Mays Landing, Hamilton, NJ 08330, USA		
Urgent		Call Back Requested:	No

Status	
Record #	20,190
Event Status:	2023-Dec-22 12:03 PM
Route To:	Other, Route to - Other: Witness Email Other Duty Officer(s) Notified :
Notes:	
Watch Officer:	

NTSB

CONTROLLED UNCLASSIFIED INFORMATION

RECORD OF ☐ VISIT ☐ CONFERENCE OR ☒ TELEPHONE CALL		TIME 9:00 AM	DATE 12/26/2023
NAME (S) OF PERSON (S) CONTACTED OR IN CONFERENCE AND LOCATION David Collins, Chief Pilot, U.S. Helicopters USXA, [REDACTED]		ROUTING	
		SYMBOL	INITIALS
SUBJECT Accident Investigation N606HD			
DIGEST Covered the following facts via telephone:			
1. The accident flight was operated under Part 91. Neither the pilot or aircraft were on their Part 135 Certificate. All of their helicopters have a radar altimeter though it is not required for their Part 91 helicopters. It is displayed on the 'Aspen' screen.			
2. The radar altimeter does not flash or warn when close to the ground.			
3. They operate under contract with ABC and maintain full operational control.			
4. The PICs last Flight Review was 2-6-22 and was done by fellow pilot Raymond Oeschlin			
[REDACTED] The PIC is instrument rated but does not maintain instrument currency.			
5. Confirmed the PIC was seated in the forward right hand seat and the camera operator was seated in the rear left seat.			
6. Any transmissions (audio/visual) are made via microwave real time back to the station.			
CONCLUSION, ACTION TAKEN, OR REQUIRED Investigation Ongoing			
DATE 12/26/2023	TITLE Aviation Safety Inspector	SIGNATURE [REDACTED] STEPHAN A. KOZA	

RECORD OF ☒ VISIT ☐ CONFERENCE OR ☐ TELEPHONE CALL		TIME 10:00 AM	DATE 12/27/2023
NAME (S) OF PERSON (S) CONTACTED OR IN CONFERENCE AND LOCATION Director of Maintenance USXA at PNE Justin 704-690-4453		ROUTING	
		SYMBOL	INITIALS
SUBJECT Accident Investigation N606HD			
DIGEST Accompanied AW ASIs Nagy and Ostrowski to the maintenance hanger at PNE. Confirmed from the DOM a list of personnel phone numbers, dispatch procedures and crew schedule. The rest of the visit concerned maintenance regarding the accident helicopter.			
CONCLUSION, ACTION TAKEN, OR REQUIRED Investigation Ongoing			
DATE 12/27/2023	TITLE Aviation Safety Inspector	SIGNATURE  STEPHAN A. KOZA	

RECORD OF ☐ VISIT ☒ CONFERENCE OR ☐ TELEPHONE CALL		TIME 11:00 AM	DATE 01/05/2024
NAME (S) OF PERSON (S) CONTACTED OR IN CONFERENCE AND LOCATION WPVI 6ABC Assistant Manager Thomas Davis [REDACTED] Lawyer Fred Marczyk		ROUTING	
		SYMBOL	INITIALS
[REDACTED] News Desk Dispatchers Elizabeth Plyler [REDACTED] & Tanya			
Hosar [REDACTED] Station Manager Bernie Prazenlia [REDACTED]			
SUBJECT Accident Investigation N606HD			
DIGEST Met with the above WPVI station personnel along with AW ASI Alex Nagy. The following items were discussed and recorded in 'bullet point' format:			
1. NTSB IIC is Todd Gunther and they are in contact with him.			
2. FAA Public Affairs # [REDACTED] should information be requested from the FAA.			
3. Confirmed that we are from the FAA FSDO and are still collecting data and have no speculation or inference as to the cause of the crash.			
4. Reassured the station personnel we are only looking to collect information with no judgment as to the information provided by any source at this time.			
5. When asked if any transmissions (audio or visual) were received on the accident flight Mr Thomas Davis stated that "all received microwave transmissions were auto erased after 7 days." This would have encompassed the footage of the Christmas Light Display filmed approximately 15 minutes prior to the accident.			
6. When dispatch/arrival procedures were discussed they stated that it is done via phone call to the hanger. No texting or phone calls are made during flight.			
7. Dispatch personnel stated that the PIC is never under pressure to launch unless all risks are mitigated; i.e. maintenance, weather, fitness, airspace etc.			
CONCLUSION, ACTION TAKEN, OR REQUIRED Investigation ongoing.			
DATE 01/05/2024	TITLE Aviation Safety Inspector	SIGNATURE [REDACTED] STEPHAN A. KOZA	



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Todd Gunther
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: January 7, 2024
Subject: Information Provided by Mr. Michael Weismann (Witness)
NTSB Case Number: ERA24FA069

According to Mr. Weismann, He would watch television in the den in his home. He looked out of the window which faced the direction of the Wharton State Forest and he observed a “solid light moving pretty fast.”

The light was descending steeply in a straight angle of descent, and it did not appear to be struggling.



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Todd Gunther
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: January 7, 2024
Subject: Information Provided by Mr. Terry Bonaparte (Witness)
NTSB Case Number: ERA24FA069

According to Mr. Bonaparte, he lives in the Wharton State Forest. He believes he saw the helicopter go down on fire between 7:30 PM and 8:00 PM on December 19, 2023.

Mr. Bonaparte was looking out his window and noticed a "giant orange ball" go down in the forest. He thought it was from a meteor shower but learned of the accident on the following morning.

Re: Request from NTSB

From billmathis [REDACTED]

Date Mon 1/8/2024 8:24 AM

To Todd Gunther [REDACTED]

[CAUTION] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click any links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello Todd

I was on my back porch forget what day it was now but my location must be on a air route which I always see the news helicopters flying overhead coming and going . The day in question I heard a helicopter heading over me with the normal engine /rotor sound but as it went over head I heard a very unusual grinding type sound from the rear rotor area ??? the machine was flying normal but that sound I never heard before . I heard from the news that the news chopper left from the northeast airport so this may not even be a concern sorry if i caused you more work .

Best
Bill Mathis

On Sunday, January 7, 2024, 12:29:58 PM EST, Todd Gunther [REDACTED]

Mr. Mathis,

Good afternoon.

Thank you for contacting us about the accident you observed.

I tried calling you and could not hear you after the phone picked up.

When you have a chance, can you please email me with what you observed?

I appreciate it.

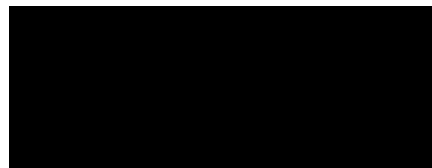
All my best,

Todd

Todd Gunther

Senior Air Safety Investigator

National Transportation Safety Board



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Re: NTSB request

From Terry Bonaparte [REDACTED]

Date Mon 1/8/2024 3:36 PM

To Todd Gunther [REDACTED]

[CAUTION] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click any links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

On Tuesday the night of December 19 somewhere around the 8 o'clock hour, I was at home on the couch with my dog watching TV. My friend Jeanne was in the kitchen. My dog snapped his head to the big window to the left. I looked out the window to see what looked like a flaming orange streak across the sky not to far above the tree line. The direction would have been North West. I said to Jeanne "What the hell was that did you see that?" Then that was it. I thought what can I do about it. The next morning on my way to work she called me and told me about the ABC helicopter that crashed not far from my place. I live deep in Wharton State Forest approximately 4 miles in from Batsto Village off of Bulltown Road off of Smith Lane on what is Gager's Lane on a TOPO map. On a TOPO map this area is known as Tylertown. A friend who is a State Park Police officer sent me a pic of a map of Wharton State Forest circling the approximate crash site. I then found online what showed to be the entire flight path of the helicopter from the time it left Philadelphia down to the Smithville NJ area and then back. It was depicted as a green line above the topography. Where the green line ended which is where they lost contact with the helicopter would be approximately 4-5 miles in a straight line in the direction I saw the orange streak in the sky headed that night. Based on what I saw , the location of the crash site and the entire flight path I saw on line of the ABC helicopter ,I am 100% certain that what I saw that night was the ABC helicopter on fire seconds before it went down. I then contacted ABC News and reported what I saw. Then I contacted what I think was you guys (NTSB) and left my name and number with a woman who answered the phone .

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 7, 2024, at 12:20 PM, Todd Gunther [REDACTED]

Terry,

Thank you for reaching out to us and offering to provide a statement.

We look forward to receiving it.

All my best and thank you again,

Todd

Todd Gunther
Senior Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

[REDACTED]
Washington, DC 20594
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Todd Gunther
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: January 31, 2024

Subject: Information Provided by Ms. Rosalyn Collins (Spouse of Pilot Monroe Smith)
NTSB Case Number: ERA24FA069

According to Ms. Collins, Mr. Smith was fine when he left for work that morning and had been fine for the two days prior to that.

Mr. Smith would usually go to bed between 9:30 pm and 10:00 pm when he had to fly the next day.

The week that the accident happened was his "late week" where he would leave the house at 12:30 pm versus his "early weeks" when he would leave the house in the morning.

It was just a normal day. He ate breakfast, showered, and then dressed. She walked him to the door, then gave him a kiss, and he walked down to the car and left for work. He left home in a very good mood.

They would text each other every day, and on the day of the accident, at 6:17 pm is when she received his last text message.

They were "Foodies," and he ate well.

He had not recently experienced, any colds, flu, or Covid. He did not have any alcohol or drug use and had not experienced any dizziness or fainting spells.

He had no heart issues, diabetes, or hypoglycemia and he was due a medical (for flying) in April.

He got along well with everyone at US Helicopters, and they loved him.

He did not mention any problems with the helicopter, and he flew three flights that day.

RECORD OF ☐ VISIT ☐ CONFERENCE OR ☒ TELEPHONE CALL		TIME 10:00 AM	DATE 02/02/2024
NAME (S) OF PERSON (S) CONTACTED OR IN CONFERENCE AND LOCATION Record of phone calls of potential witnesses as provided by the NTSB. Mike		ROUTING	
		SYMBOL	INITIALS
Wiessman [REDACTED] 1-19-24 1030, Terry Bonaparte [REDACTED] 1-19-24			
1050, John Bell [REDACTED] 1-19-24 1100, William Mathis [REDACTED]			
2-2-24 0930, Thomas Harding [REDACTED] 2-2-24 0930.			
SUBJECT N606HD Accident Investigation			
DIGEST			
1. Mike Weissman - From his home in Hammonton, NJ he saw a solid light (most likely the landing light) descend into the trees. He did not see a fire or explosion. From his location and description this appears to be accurate and matches the physical evidence.			
2. Terry Bonaparte - From his home 4 miles away in the Wharton State Forest he saw a fire and orange streak from the helicopter prior to it hitting the trees. He insists there was fire prior to impact. He was asked if what he really saw was the post crash fire/explosion or initial contact with the trees but he said there was fire prior to impact. This does not agree with the physical evidence and the other eyewitness.			
3. John Bell - Left messages, no response.			
4. William Mathis - No involvement and this is an incorrect reference.			
5. Thomas Harding - He saw the 3 ship C-130 formation in the area and thought it might be a factor. Their location and activity is already known and confirmed with ATC radar/audio playback.			
CONCLUSION, ACTION TAKEN, OR REQUIRED			
Investigation ongoing and this is forwarded to the NTSB for further interview if they deem necessary.			
DATE 02/02/2024	TITLE Aviation Safety Inspector	SIGNATURE [REDACTED] STEPHAN A. KOZA	