

To Whom it may concern,

The first thing I noticed walking toward the crash site was the Helicopter upside down with the saw pipe still attached, pipe broke in half mid-point, possibly indicating that what happened was too fast for an experience pilot like Brandon not to be able to release the saw in a timely manner. The Tailboom cut-off some good distance away, Main Rotor Blades mangle and scattered in a manner that indicated that the engine was running full throttle as it was coming down with enough force for the blades to cut the Tailboom. There were all kinds of different debris thrown around the crash site mostly remains of the Main Rotor Head, again indicating same stated before "Engine Running" till fuel starvation once frame was upside down. On a closer look at the Aircraft, I was surprised to find Engine, Engine mounts, Engine Driveshaft, Transmission and related components intact, I proceeded to grab the Engine to Transmission Driveshaft attempting to spin both ways and to my surprise again they spin freely indicating that neither of those components were not lock or damage in a manner that seem they were the culprits on the accident. Nose of the Helicopter was crush/damage in a manner consistent with impacts from trees and branches as it was coming down. On a walk around the area and towards the Aerial Saw someone points at what it seems like a hole form by the impact of the Aerial Saw as it came straight down and consistent with what look like the location where the event started, at that point it looks to me like he drops straight down, Beam/saw hit the ground and launch him forward and down through the trees. The area where the accident happened is a mountainous area with many hills and fields, even though I did not personally check wind speed or gust spread at that time I was aware of how windy and gusty it was at that moment twenty-five miles away in Jackson County Airport where I was located.

I am not an aircraft crash investigations expert, the information above is based on opinions and assumptions from previous experiences.

Thanks

Yamil Gonzalez

1 Everyone arrived @ the LZ by 0800 for our PJB. Brandon went over the helicopter & saw with asplundh, ~~and~~ Daniel & myself. Once ~~we~~ we started trimming, the sun started coming up over the mountains. I'd say it was low-mid 30's when we started this morning, little wind the first few flights. Mid morning to lunch, the sky became overcast, and the wind began to pick up a little. Brandon mentioned the wind a few times and I told him we could set it down if ~~we~~ he didn't feel comfortable, and I said we're in no rush. Brandon said the wind was still manageable and was not an issue for the time being and if it did pick up we would call it quits for the day. This is a conversation we have almost daily while working in this industry. ~~At~~ Between 1200-1500 there were a few times ~~and~~ little snowflakes were falling, not an issue at all, still 100% vizibility, but that's how cold it was all day. ^{During} Brandon's second to last flight, the line crossed a large creek and I couldn't find a way across, so I walked the edge of the creek & called out the major hazards I could see to him (Top / geyser / fence). Then he landed to refuel, ~~and~~ picked back up to continue cutting across the creek. I radioed to Brandon that I was going to drive down the road to try to find a creek crossing so I could be with him again. He told me there was a crossing maybe 100yds down the road, I went there and decided not to drive my truck through it because it was very soft, didn't want to get stuck. I radioed to Brandon that I was going to find somewhere to cross on foot so I could start calling out any hazards again. He told me to take my time, but I never do because I do not like ~~being~~ them trimming on their own.

I drove further up the road and found a gravel bar to walk across. I radioed back to Brandon that I found a spot to walk across and I said something funny to him (can't remember what it was) Brandon radioed back to acknowledge I would be back with him in minutes. At this point I'm probably 300 yds from him. I pull my truck off the road, shut my door and everything went quiet. ~~As~~ As everything went quiet I heard a little thud.

As I looked back where he was trimming, Rick got on the radio and said he crashed, as I saw the helicopter on the ground. I jumped in my truck and blew through the initial creek crossing I didn't feel comfortable with crossing through before. I got to the helicopter and Rick also got there, then a few more Asplundh guys. I got to the heli (It was upside down) and assessed Brandon and made sure the heli would not catch fire. Brandon was still strapped in, blood dripping from his head to the ground. He was coherent enough when I told him I was going to cut his seatbelt and move him away from the helicopter just in case a fire started. Myself, Rick and someone else supported Brandon's head and under his arms. I cut the seatbelt and we pulled him out & moved him approximately 15 yds away. There was no smoke, no fuel leaking no fire. Asplundh guy gave me his jacket to put on Brandon to keep him warm, I was supporting his head & his side. Brandon kept saying he was uncomfortable & he hurt between his shoulder blades. He kept thanking us then saying he couldn't feel his legs. ~~At~~ At this point some neighbors came, a nurse that checked his breathing and put a bandage on his head. I forgot to mention as soon as he crashed, Brandon called 911 & got paramedics on route to our location.

WEST VIRGINIA STATE POLICE

STATEMENT OF: DANIEL BLANDON PHONE: [REDACTED]

ADDRESS: [REDACTED]

D.O.B. 11/16/88 SSN: _____ DATE: 03/18/2024 TIME: 1835

STATEMENT TAKEN BY: Tracy M. Masnick

LOCATION: 3978 Lee Creek Road, Beckley, WV

Position: Job Title - LZ GENERAL | Signature Utility Services

There was

no emergency call from the pilot. While sitting in my truck
observing the landing zone (39.130999, -81.6718801). The ground
crew yelled over the radio @ 1723 hrs, the helicopter crashed.
At 1725 hrs. the homeowner @ the aforementioned residence called
911 to inform them of the crash. 1725 hrs I notified my
managers via phone call. Robbie LANG [REDACTED] It should
noted we do fuel calls, which are check-ins at 20 minute
intervals. @ 1716 hrs the pilot advised there was 20 lbs of fuel left
and requested a 15 min timer be set. 1800

Jack Buffmeyer - ground crew w/ Signature Utility Services

Phone / Personnel / Belongings

SIGNATURE: [REDACTED]

DATE: 03/18/2024