



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Michael Hicks

Air Safety Investigator

(GAAID) General Aviation Accident Investigation Division **September 6th 2017**

NTSB Accident Number: GAA17CA401

Aircraft Registration & Make/Model: N3203D, Robinson, R44 Raven II

Accident Location: Paoli, IN

Accident Date: 07JUL2017 @ 1600 (cst)

Subject: Memorandum for Record

In support of the NTSB Air Safety Accident Investigation involving accident helicopter N3203D, the NTSB Investigator spoke with the pilot (Merrick Vander Lugt). The following is a synopsis of the conversation.

The pilot stated that he was in a rush. The aircraft was heavy and there was a tailwind. He was approaching the end of the field and he ascended over the powerlines, and started to dive. He laid the edges of the field first. The winds were out of the south/west about 15 knots. During the left turn to lay another application the pilot did not gain the altitude (40 ft.) or airspeed (he did not know) needed to level off and apply the load. He noticed a high sink rate. The temperature was in the mid 80's and the humidity was about 80 percent. The pilot leveled the skids and the helicopter didn't hit very hard and the skids did not spread much. The helicopter struck the ground and bounced about 10 feet and ended up on its left side. It happened so fast that after the helicopter bounced, he does not remember the exact rollover sequence.

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