



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

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Air Safety Investigator
General Aviation Accident Division

Date: 1/2/2019
Person Contacted: Stanley Lee (pilot)
NTSB Accident Number: GAA19CA124

Narrative:

The following is a synopsis of the information provided by the pilot in an email on this date:

- The pilot left FA22 about 0915 and flew to SRQ where he landed and waited for my passengers (1 photographer Peter Bowden and 1 videographer Tom McKnight)
- The purpose of the flight was a promotional video for a new boat
- He lifted from SRQ about 1020
- He met the boat in Sarasota bay and flew with it North into Tampa Bay
- The photographer was in contact with the boat by text and instructions were given as to course/ speed etc.
- They filmed for close to an hour
- The accident happened about 1120
- He was about 20 feet and flying about 50/60 knots at the time
- about 3/4 mile offshore, he was asked to turn right and line up with the boat
- During the turn, he was looking over my right shoulder when he felt a bang on the left side of my head, he was almost knocked out but managed to flare the helicopter to get rid of airspeed; then as the helicopter settled into the water, he rolled the machine to the left to stop the rotor blades
- He remembered looking at a hole in the front Perspex about 9 inches wide at the top, tapering to a point about 2 feet down the center support
- Water was pouring in the left side as the doors had been removed
- He remembers settling onto the seabed, loosening my seatbelt then being pulled onto the boat

- He has no other memory until 6 days later, he was in Blake Hospital ICU unconscious
- His left ear was almost severed, a few cuts on my head and left jaw was swollen, also his lungs were full of water
- Passengers were uninjured
- He remembers SRQ warning of bird activity near the airport that morning but there is always a lot of birds around the coast which I am aware
- Just before the turn, he saw maybe a dozen what he took to be Terns flying from my right to left, he considered them no factor as he was turning right and would have ended up behind them; he can only assume that a straggler hit me
- The videographer was looking through his viewfinder and the photographer was texting the boat at the time of the accident and have no idea what happened
- He does not think the accident was preventable as he simply did not see the bird
- This account is all he could remember at this time and it is the truth as far as he is aware