



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Eleazar Nepomuceno
Air Safety Investigator
General Aviation Accident Division

Date: February 28, 2019
Person Contacted: Trent Massie
NTSB Accident Number: GAA19CA139

Narrative:

The following is a synopsis of the statement provided by the pilot on this date:

It was approximately 3:30 in the afternoon. I had three heli-ski groups in the field. I was dropping the final group for their final run and was at an LZ that I had used before. It was about a 20-degree slope and that ridge had been windswept, so shale was showing. As I was toed in, the guide and the first two passengers were out and I could see rocks moving above and in front of the blades. I had 1.5 - 2 feet of clearance when I noticed a slab of rock peel up and go into the blades. I immediately pulled up and the helicopter felt smooth, so I moved up the hill about 30 feet and toed in again. I told the remaining 2 passengers to get out there. They got out and shut the door. I lifted and turned with the intention of heading down to the glacier to shut down and look at the blades.

Approximately 10 seconds in the air, a 1 per hop started and shortly thereafter turned suddenly into a violent shake. At that point I knew I wouldn't make it to the glacier and turned back towards the hill to quickly get out of the air. Shortly thereafter, as I was approximately 150 feet above the trees, the hydraulics quit and the helicopter nosed up. I forced the nose and the collective down. At tree level, I saw a small clearing and aimed for it. Approximately 30 feet off the ground I heard contact with the first tree. I glided into the snow at about a 45-degree angle uphill.