



INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Elliott Simpson
Aviation Accident Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Date: November 22, 2015
Person Contacted: Gary Roesink, [REDACTED]
NTSB Accident Number: WPR16FA029

Narrative:

During a telephone conversation Mr. Roesink stated the following:

He is the chief pilot for Corporate Helicopters in San Diego, and had made the flight log entries recorded in N711BE's logbooks during the period September through October 2015.

Mr. Roesink had flown with Mr. Erickson in a demonstration Astar at Corporate Helicopters earlier in the year, the demonstration lasted about 2 hours. He had also flown with Mr. Erickson in the accident helicopter before it was purchased. Mr. Erickson is an acquaintance of Ivor Shier, the Director of Operations at Corporate, and Mr. Shier was the primary contact for purchase.

When the helicopter arrived at Corporate from the factory, Mr. Erickson wanted to have an air conditioning system installed before he took the helicopter home to Montana, however, the tailboom bolts needed to be tightened after 25-30 hours since new, and the AC system would get in the way of this operation. Therefore the decision was made to fly the helicopter for about 15 hours and utilize some of this time to provide familiarization/demo flights to Mr. Erickson. Mr. Roesink then flew the helicopter for about 15 hours both with another Corporate pilot, and Mr. Erickson.

After the AC was installed, Mr. Erickson and Roesink flew to Yuma, Arizona in N711BE to close escrow on the helicopter sale. Mr. Erickson was scheduled to perform Airbus factory training November 2, and Mr. Roesink explained that he would not provide formal training until Mr. Erickson had completed the Airbus course.

With regards to Mr. Erickson's flying abilities, Mr. Roesink stated that he was good flying from "A to B", once airborne, but he was having difficulty with other aspects, and while he was a relatively competent pilot, both Mr. Roesink and Shier insisted that he complete the factory training and not fly solo. He further stated that while he is not a medical expert, he believed that Mr. Erickson had a neuromuscular condition, as he had difficulty holding a pen without it shaking. He also used his right hand to reach the engine start switch rather than his left, stating that he had problems with his left shoulder. His use of the left hand throughout the flights seemed unhindered, and he had no difficulty reaching lower controls.

During the flights, they performed one dolly landing, which went "not too bad" although it was a large dolly, which he believes was Mr. Erickson's. They had practiced multiple pickups and set downs at Ramona airport, and he did improve during that period. He did not see Mr. Erickson's logbook at any point during the flights, and no entries were therefore made.

Mr. Roesink stated that he was incredibly surprised when he heard about the accident because it was his understanding from Erickson that he was not going to fly the helicopter until he had taken the factory training. Mr. Erickson confided in Mr. Shier after closing escrow that he was not happy with the helicopter and was going to sell it.

Mr. Roesink does not know the passenger Wayne Lewis.

His observation after watching the videos on TV is that because the helicopter continued in a stable upright position, the autopilot SAS system was most likely engaged, and that while he could fly with this on, the controls would be stiff. Mr. Roesink was not familiar with the system, so did not give any briefing on its operation during the demonstration flights. With regard to the hydraulic switch, he does not see any way the helicopter could have been controllable by Mr. Erickson if it was disabled, and they had never discussed flying with it intentionally "off".

He believes the final 1.6 hour entry in the logbooks was with Tony Bowen because he was busy that day.



INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Elliott Simpson
Aviation Accident Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Date: November 23, 2015
Person Contacted: Noel Yantos, [REDACTED]
NTSB Accident Number: WPR16FA029

Narrative:

The following is an email correspondence from Mr. Yantos to Scott Worthington from the FAA:

From: Noel Yantos
Sent: Friday, November 20, 2015 8:46 AM
To: Worthington, Scott M (FAA)
Subject: Bruce

I have known and had opportunity to fly with Mr. Bruce Erickson over the last 6 years. Mr. Erickson was a high time pilot with lots of turbine jet experience. He had owned several Citation jets and helicopters in his life and operated them for many years single pilot. Most recently he had talked about buying another CJ and wanted to get current with LOFT and myself. On a recent training flight he expressed great concern about landing on the cart and operations close to the ground with his newly purchased helicopter. He discussed the fact that he had spent many hours practicing landing on the cart with an instructor from Corporate Helicopter and still did not feel proficient doing so as the helicopter was very unstable close to the ground and especially close to the cart. We discussed that on November 18th he was going to fly for the first time without an instructor. I had expressed to him that if he didn't feel comfortable with the cart landing that he should just put it on the ramp. He agreed whole-heartedly. Mr. Erickson was very concerned and aware that age was beginning to affect his reaction time in the cockpit. We had many conversations about proficiency and how extra flying could make up for that degeneration of skills. He agreed as well with this idea.

Bruce was my friend, and I will miss him very much. I can only hope that his death will be a learning event and will help another aviator to avoid a bad situation and make a safe decision.

--

Noel Yantos
President
LOFT

During a telephone conversation with Elliott Simpson on November 23, 2015, Mr. Yantos stated the following:

Mr. Yantos is a fixed wing pilot, and President of LOFT, a Part 142 certified flight simulator facility. He was approached by Mr. Erickson about 6 years ago because he wanted to get training at LOFT in order to get current in the Cessna Citation Jet (CJ) series. He proceeded with intermittent training, stopping and starting rather than completing the full course. His relationship with Mr. Erickson then progressed to one of business, as he started to assist Mr. Yantos with financing for his flight simulator business. He described him as a proud and successful person, with strong ego.

Mr. Yantos last flew with Mr. Erickson on November 16 in a CJ used for training. During that flight Mr. Erickson expressed concern on multiple occasions with the AStar he had purchased, particularly with trouble he was experiencing landing, and specifically landing on carts. He stated that he was going to sell the helicopter.

Mr. Yantos opined that in his view Mr. Erickson was, "past his prime", with regard to aircraft operation and that Mr. Erickson knew that, and as such usually flew with a professional pilot, although every now and again he would fly on his own. His reaction times were delayed, and his hands often shook, although they would stabilize once he grasped the flight controls. He has flown on many occasions with Mr. Erickson, and never felt he was fully proficient, and always would tell him to fly with another pilot, or "never leave without me".

He believes Mr. Erickson's wife died about 10 years ago, and that they were close. During his interactions with Mr. Erickson, he had the impression that her death had resulted in him taking a more cavalier approach to flying; he would often let the airplane get ahead of him, would not be concerned, and did not seem to have the desire or ability to "ramp up" in time to resolve the situation.

He was aware that Mr. Erickson was going to fly his helicopter on the day of the accident for practice, and he asked if Mr. Yantos wanted to come along. He had met the passenger a few times before with Mr. Erickson, but did not know anything about him.

At the time of the accident Mr. Erickson was also attempting to get current in the CJ, with the goal of eventually purchasing one again, although Mr. Yantos expressed doubt that he would be able to reach a safe level of proficiency.

At no point since knowing Mr. Erickson has he never seen his logbooks, or therefore made an entry.



INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Elliott Simpson
Aviation Accident Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Interview Date: November 19, 2015
Persons Contacted: Premier Jet FBO Employees: Nate Steiger (Line Service Manager), Daniel Harabagiu, Jerry Harrington, Miles Fairchild
NTSB Accident Number: WPR16FA029

Narrative:

Nate Steiger

He had never seen the pilot fly on his own before, and this was the first time he had seen the passenger. He assumed the passenger was a pilot or CFI. The pilot has had his helicopter kept at Premier for approximately the last 4 years. The last time he had seen the pilot was about one-month prior when he flew in the accident helicopter about 4 times in one week with a pilot from Corporate Helicopters.

The helicopter initially departed at 1411.

On the return flight, he observed the initial landing attempt and saw the helicopter was wobbling and he was a little concerned. He had seen that the dolly had spun, and someone had put on a 3rd set of chocks. Then he went back inside and didn't see anything. He assumed the pilot was going to land on the ground and leave it to be moved later.

Miles Fairchild

The standard operating procedure for the accident helicopter is to depart from the west end of ramp.

The dolly is always chocked each corner (2 chocks total) which was how it departed.

On this occasion, the pilot departed from the east end of ramp. Miles then moved the dolly to the west ramp and placed two chocks. He then came out after moving a Falcon into the hangar and observed that the ramp had moved 180°, so he assumed it had spun around. He saw Austin rechock with two chocks, then he (Miles) then put on a third chock.

Daniel Harabagiu and Jerry Harrington

Both observed the final approach, watching the helicopter fly east to west from runway 24. They watched him hover taxi to the ramp. They did not see the initial landing, but a pilot in a Range Rover on the ramp pointed to the spun-out dolly. They then saw the helicopter land on the ramp. It waited on the ramp for about 2 minutes, then departed for the accident landing attempt.

They have never seen the pilot fly on his own, and knew that he always flew with a professional "backup" pilot.



INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Elliott Simpson
Aviation Accident Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Date: November 19, 2015
Person Contacted: Sean Boney
NTSB Accident Number: WPR16FA029

Narrative:

The following is a summary of a correspondence with Mr. Boney taken the day following the accident.

Mr. Boney initially observed the helicopter approached the dolly from the east while in his airplane on the Premier ramp. It appeared to make a landing attempt on the dolly, with the helicopter landing halfway on the dolly, and then teetering back such that its tail came a few inches short of striking the ground. He became concerned when he saw the helicopter come back around a short time later to land from the west. He decided to record the landing on his cell phone, because based on the prior landing attempt, he was concerned the helicopter might crash. He positioned himself behind a car at the corner of the FBO's hangar, out of fear that he might get hurt. The helicopter approached the pad and hovered while rocking side to side. It touched down on the pad in the exact same manner as before, teetering back and forth. This time the tail struck the ground, and the accident ensued.



INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Elliott Simpson
Aviation Accident Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Date: November 23, 2015
Person Contacted: Mark Anthony (Tony) Bowen ([REDACTED])
NTSB Accident Number: WPR16FA029

Narrative:

During a telephone conversation Mr. Bowen stated the following:

He flew with Mr. Erickson in the accident helicopter on November 13, 2015. They spent 2 hours in the helicopter (VEMD time), with a recorded Hobbs time of 1.6 hours. (This was the last entry in the flight logbooks). He understood that Mr. Erickson had yet to fly the helicopter solo.

He was introduced to Mr. Erickson by Mr. Roesink. Mr. Roesink had been providing training in the AS350, but his schedule was busy so he asked Mr. Bowen if he was available to do some flight training. Mr. Erickson contacted Mr. Bowen via phone and they set up a training date for Nov 13th at 0900.

Mr. Bowen stated that Mr. Erickson had pleasant demeanor, and stated to him that he had been flying for a long time, but had limited experience in the AS350. They performed a preflight together, and he observed that Mr. Erickson was unable to climb up to examine the rotor head due to prior surgery to his left shoulder. The injury also prevented him from lifting his left arm unaided to reach the engine start switch on the overhead panel. To reach that control he needed to assist his left arm with his right hand.

They discussed the intentions for the flight, and Mr. Erickson wanted to focus primarily on dolly landings. Unable to safely practice on the cart at an FBO in Palomar, they departed for French Valley, however the airport was busy so they diverted to Hemet. Once at Hemet they practiced hovering, vertical takeoffs and landings, and simulated cart landings using cracks in the tarmac and taxi lines as a 90 degree reference point to simulate the right corner of a cart. They practiced for about 45-60 minutes.

During the practice Mr. Bowen pointed out the difference between the Bell 407 and AS350, mainly that in the AS350 the skids are behind the pilot, so attention should be placed on external references in relation to other parts of the helicopter structure and his position in the aircraft. Initially Mr. Erickson wanted to enable the Stability Augmentation System (SAS), because someone had told him if he used SAS, "he could land it like a pro". Mr. Bowen told Mr. Erickson that he wanted him to be able to fly the helicopter proficiently without the use of the SAS. However, for demonstration purposes, they did two landings with the SAS enabled. Mr. Erickson was "fighting" against its inputs with unsatisfactory results,

and did not understand how to utilize the SAS release button on the cyclic to override the SAS forces, so they turned off the system. Mr. Erickson improved throughout the training. Enroute back to Palomar they practiced pinnacle and confined area landings, and an ILS approach. He performed the approach fairly well, but was having difficulty with ball control. After Mr. Bowen informed him that the SAS does not maintain yaw control with power inputs, Mr. Erickson made the correct inputs throughout the rest of the approach and SAS was turned off at 200 ft agl. Arriving at the FBO, Mr. Erickson landed on the cart well, being talked on but with no control input from Mr. Bowen. During subsequent discussions, Mr. Bowen emphasized that if he couldn't land on the cart, then he should not hesitate to instead land on the ground.

Also during the return flight Mr. Bowen demonstrated flying with the TR HYD switch off. After slowing the helicopter down to 70 knots, Mr. Bowen demonstrated that there is no caution warning panel annunciator light indicating it was off. After experiencing the increased pedal forces, Mr. Erickson stated that he would always make sure it was switched on.

Before and during the flight, Mr. Erickson expressed concern with the AS350, stating that everything felt backwards, and that he had not flown it enough to feel comfortable. He stated that he was going to sell the helicopter and go back to flying a Bell 407.

During post-flight discussion, Mr. Bowen recommended additional training, and that he take a class at HeliStream, which offers intensive Emergency Procedure training including full touchdown autorotations. Mr. Erickson said he wanted to fly again with him, and Mr. Bowen provided Mr. Erickson with his schedule noting days that he was free to do more training.

Mr. Erickson stated he had 20,000 total flight hours and about 5,000 hours of flight time in the Bell 407. Mr. Erickson did not provide logbooks, therefore, no entry was created by Mr. Bowen.