



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Noreen Price
Aviation Accident Investigator
Alaska Regional Office

Date: November 18, 2016 @ 1700
Persons Contacted: Meghan Soukup and Thomas Lefler
NTSB Accident Number: WPR17FA021, N81GG

Narrative:

On November 18, I visited the home of Ms. Soukup and Mr. Lefner at [REDACTED] Kamehameha V Hwy, Kaunakakai, HI, on Molokai Island. Ms. Soukup contacted the Molokai Police department in regards to witnessing unusual behavior of the accident helicopter on the evening of the accident. Their home is on a south facing hill on the southeast end of the island about 2 miles from the accident.

Ms. Soukup said that she and her partner were having dinner outside at about 1830 when they saw N81GG flying "surprisingly low" while slowly approaching their house from the southwest. The helicopter had its search light on and appeared to be searching for something. She said that she knew what helicopter it was because she was accustomed to that helicopter flying behind her house enroute to the pilot's house on a routine basis. Ms. Soukup said that she has seen N81GG on other occasions when the weather was bad, with his search light on over the beach, but never over her house. "He's flown in horrific conditions before. Everyone here knows that." She reported that it was very dark at that time, but the lights of Maui were visible. It was very windy and there were clouds and rain up higher on the mountain.

Mr. Lefler agreed with Ms. Soukup's description, and added that he thought it was rainy when the helicopter appeared. He thought that the helicopter looked unusual because it was low and slow, almost over their house. He had Ms. Soukup take pictures with her iPhone. Then he heard the helicopter motor make a loud revving noise and depart to the southeast.

At the conclusion of the conversation, they each said that they did not personally know the pilot, but that he was loved by everyone in the area.

A picture taken by Ms. Soukup on her iPhone is provided in figure 1. The time stamp on the image metadata is 1836. (See figure 2.)



Figure 1. iPhone photograph of N81GG at 1836.

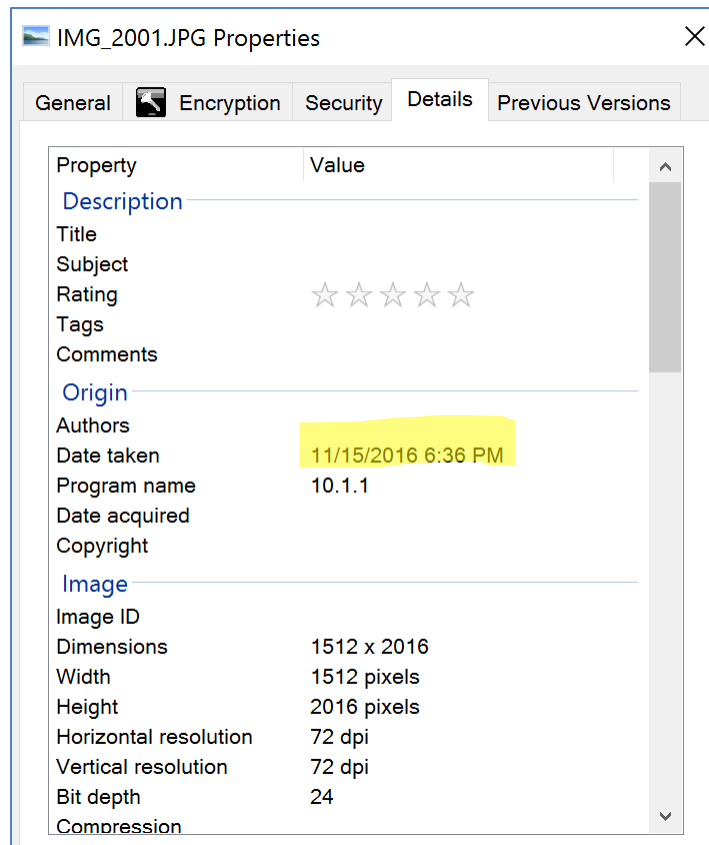


Figure 2. Properties of iPhone image indicating 1836 local on November 15, 2016.