



RECORD OF PHONE CONVERSATION

Fabian Salazar
Aviation Accident Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Date: August 25, 2018
Person Contacted: Kristopher R. Proctor
US Forest Service Law Enforcement
NTSB Accident Number: WPR18LA242

The following is a copy of a written statement provided by Mr. Proctor,

At about 15:45 on Saturday afternoon I was located at the intersection of HWY 108 and Clarks Fork road assisting with a road closure. This location is about $\frac{1}{4}$ to a $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the Brightman Dump L.Z...

I heard and then saw a red and white A-Star helicopter come towards the L.Z. and my location. It was being followed by what sounded like a Huey helicopter. The A-Star then turned off away from my location, away from the L.Z... I then heard the loud distinct air pop off of the rotor of the Huey. Like a hard turn. I told the Deputy that I was with that didn't sound right. I saw a quick glimpse of red and white through the trees towards the L.Z.'s direction from me. I then heard a second hard air pop off the rotor of the helicopter. I then was at the cab of my truck where I heard on my radio and the announcement of there's an air craft down.

I immediately responded code 3 to the L.Z. location about a $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from my location. I called Stanislaus Dispatch to notify them that I was close by and responding. As I drove up the road to the Brightman Dump L.Z. I saw that the red and white Huey helicopter was laying on its side upslope from the Bright L.Z. The down helicopter was about 350 to 400 yards up slope from the helipad. I then notified dispatch of what I saw. I then parked near the water tank located near the Helipad. I noticed that the aircraft's engine was still running. I informed dispatch of the running engine.

When I got out of the truck I started to head up towards the crash site. I then stopped and grabbed my Nomex shirt and helmet. I then started to run up slope towards the crash site through the unburned manzanita then into the burn area. I got about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the way up the slope and realized I was pushing too hard and ran out of breath. I then slowed down a bit and kept pushing up slope over the hump of the hill. At this time the helicopter came back in view. I continued up through the

open burn area. When I got about 3/4's of the way to the helicopter I all of sudden saw the pilot walking down the hill towards me. I never noticed him exit the aircraft. He was walking down the slope carrying his reddish orange jacket in his left hand. I kept putting up my hand with a thumbs up, until he gave me a thumbs up sign back.

I attempted to call on Stanislaus Operations net to notify them and the air craft above multiple times that he was out of the aircraft and walking towards me. No one would answer me. I then tuned back to admin net and notified Stanislaus dispatch that the pilot was out of the aircraft and was walking down to me.

As I we got closer to each other he appeared to be in over all good shape. He looked a little beat up some blood on his face. Just lightly bleeding and banged up. I then asked him are you ok and gave him the thumbs up sign. He returned the thumbs up sign and said, "I'm ok." He then followed up with, "I missed my L.Z." I then realized that he was in good shape for what had just happened. We talked and kidded a little as we walked towards the L.Z... As we got closer to the rest of the arriving personal he asked, how do I look you keep looking at me funny. I told him that he was a little cut up and banged up for what he just went through. I then turned him over to the arriving ambulance and medics.

I notified dispatch that the pilot was ok and with the medics. I asked them to please relay to everyone that the pilot is ok!

The helicopter ran for what appeared to be over an hour and half. Multiple attempts to dump water from helicopters and the Super Scooper air planes. All other personal stayed down slope from the crash site by about 250 yards. I was the only person to get within 75 yard of the helicopter, were we met at.



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Date: August 29, 2018
Person Contacted: Ryan Corey, Pilot of the A-Star
NTSB Accident Number: WPR18LA242

Mr. Corey provided a written statement that is included below.

Interview Notes [recorded by Michael Reid – ASO USFS]
Ryan Corey (Pilot) – N352SA – AS-350B3 – Sinton Helicopters
~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

Aug 26, 2018

Conducting Helicopter Coordinator (HLCO) operations when Helicopter 522 (N512TA) reported over radio that he was returning to the Bald Mountain Helibase. You could tell in his voice that something wasn't right. The pilot of 522 reported that he had a weird vibration. We (352SA) met up with 522 returning from the dip. He was about 70 knots and 1,000 AGL. David (HLCO/ATGS) suggested that 522 land at H1 which was closer than Bald Mountain Helibase. The pilot of 522 was unfamiliar with H1 so 352SA did a show me. They crossed H1 and then turned around into a hover to observe 522. The pilot (Justin -522) then stated over the radio, "that's weird it's not doing it anymore." 522 was about 1,000 AGL over H1 when the pilot (522) lowered collective and the aircraft went into a nose dive at about a 45 degree angle forward.

Mike, pilot of 517 which transported Justin (522 pilot) after the incident from H1 to Bald Mountain, mentioned that Justin said the cyclic wasn't stiff. The transmission began to hop and the nose pitched forward when he lowered the collective. *[This was third hand report from a crewmember that talked with pilot who transported 522 pilot after the fact]*

The aircraft (522) pirouetted down and hit the ground hard. His attitude was pretty level as he hit the ground. There was a lot of debris and the aircraft rolled multiple times down slope.

There was a quick discussion on board 352SA as the pilot (Ryan) wanted to immediately land but was told by David to gain some altitude so he could make some radio calls. David was very calm and collected. They could not make contact with anyone on scene (ground personnel). They noticed some puffs of smoke coming out of the engine. They coordinated some high level bucket drops over the aircraft to help mitigate the potential for a post-crash fire.

They were very upset with the lack of communication with the responding ground resources. They landed the helicopter (352SA) to let passenger (Matt) off to make contact with the people standing around watching. Once they had communications with Matt they lifted off again. Matt let them know that the pilot was out of the aircraft (522) and in the ambulance. Once they confirmed that he pilot was out they began to drop heavier bucket loads on the aircraft.

The lack of response from a medivac helicopter, which had been ordered, was upsetting to the Ryan. They kept ordering the medivac aircraft and it kept getting cancelled. This was assumed to be due to the pilot being in the ambulance. The three on board the helicopter (352SA) did not know that the pilot was out of the crashed helicopter.



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Date: August 29, 2018
Person Contacted: David Phillips
NTSB Accident Number: WPR18LA242

In a telephone interview, Mr. Phillips stated that he was working as the Air Tac controller. He was physically located in the left front seat of an A-Star (AS-350) helicopter. His duty was to control the aerial resources.

He stated that while performing his duties, he received a call from the pilot of helicopter, Helo-522. The pilot requested a return to the helibase. He cleared the pilot back at 9,500 ft mean sea level (msl). The pilot then requested that he maintain low level. The controller thought that was odd and asked the pilot if he wanted the controller to follow him to the helibase, which the pilot agreed. The controller joined up with the helicopter about mid-way down the Clark's Fork drainage while the accident helicopter was about 500 ft above ground level (agl). At that time, the pilot told the controller that "all the gauges were good, and he felt a hop."

He the pilot if he would like to land at a closer location and the pilot stated yes. He then told the pilot about a landing zone called H1 and offered to overfly the location for the pilot. He passed the helicopter on the left-hand side, flew over H1, and then had the A-Star pilot perform a climbing right-hand turn so that they could observe the pilot land. At that moment, the pilot made a radio call and stated, "it smoothed out." Shortly after, the pilot of the A-Star stated, "he lost it." The controller heard over the radio the sound of the pilot grunting as if he were fighting to control the helicopter.

The controller looked through the right side of the helicopter and saw that the helicopter was about 500 ft agl, and had a nose-low attitude of about 20° to 30° and he looked like he was going straight in. The controller stated that the helicopter was about a half mile from H1 when the nose initially went down,

and by the time he reached the helispot he was in a nose high attitude and in a lazy turn, as if the tail rotor was not used in the turn. The helicopter crossed over H1 about 200 ft agl. The helicopter was in a slow lazy turn and came to a ridgeline. It looked like he would hit the ridgeline, but did not. The slow left turn continued for 360°. The helicopter began losing altitude and struck the terrain in a left-side low attitude, contacting the ground with the left skid first. The helicopter then rolled once and came to a stop on its left side.

The controller then had the A-Star pilot climb to altitude and the controller made notifications of the accident. He saw smoke coming from the helicopter and tasked 73U to make four water drops on the helicopter. Another helicopter picked up the pilot and flew him to Bald Mountain Helibase.