



## RECORD OF CONVERSATION

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All persons listed were interviewed by Zoë Keliher

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The following is a summary of conversation:

MARK STUNZNER (BELL HELICOPTERS)

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1. The TSB of Canada report linked below had a main rotor spar that fractured from fatigue due to manufacturing issues. Of the three main rotor spar fractures (two inboard near the outboard doubler and one near the blade tip) observed on Erickson's 206L3, S/N 51313, all fractures were consistent with overload. Additionally, the blade station fracture locations on 51313 were not at the same blade station location as the Canadian blade's fracture which was near mid-span of the blade. The Canadian accident's main rotor blade fracture location was critical in the initiation of fatigue on the blade's spar. The main rotor spar fractures did not exhibit fatigue crack signatures. The Erickson 206L3 main rotor spars fractured as result of overload and not from fatigue like the Canadian Long Ranger.

2. The main rotor afterbody (blade skins and honeycomb behind main spar) fracture from the Erickson accident helicopter highlighted in your attached photos shows disturbed/bent blade skins at the linear chordwise fracture of the blade skin. This is evidence of overload fracture at impact. If a fatigue crack had begun in the trailing edge strip and progressed through the blade skins and honeycomb to the main rotor spar as shown in your other photo example, the blade skin fracture surfaces would be flat and not bent like observed on the accident helicopter. My experience working as a failure analysis engineer in Bell's lab (as well as an investigator) indicate that the blade skin fractures from the Erickson 206L3 were overload and a result of impact forces.

3. It is my understanding that the main rotor blade pieces were found relatively close to the main wreckage. If a blade spar had truly fractured in flight, the outboard portion of the blade would have likely been launched far away from the helicopter at the time of fracture due to centrifugal force. Additionally, the main transmission would have departed from the roof assembly due to excessive main rotor imbalance and this phenomenon did not happen.

4. Because of the above observations, I do not believe any more effort needs to be made in evaluating the main rotor blades for pre-impact fracture.

[www.bst-tsb.gc.ca/eng/rapports-reports/aviation/2011/a11o0205/a11o0205.pdf](http://www.bst-tsb.gc.ca/eng/rapports-reports/aviation/2011/a11o0205/a11o0205.pdf)

b. I had a Bell engineering lab person and a bearing engineer review the photos of the displaced bearing in the copilot lever. From their review, it appears that the outer race remained staked into the sleeve and also the joint between outer race and sleeve felt tight to me when I hand checked it during the wreckage exam at Medford. The Bell ASB 206L-09-156 was written to check for looseness/non-staking between the outer race and sleeve.

c. The sleeve also appears to have been properly staked to the lever housing, but then the bearing displaced from the housing by impact forces. The gouge on the bearing outer sleeve surface appears to be fresh mechanical damage and impact related. During the wreckage exam, I recall that the cyclic controls moved relatively smoothly by hand with no binding.

Zoë Keliher  
Air Safety Investigator  
Western Pacific Region

I am not aware of any other issues regarding the copilot cyclic lever or the bearing that have resulted in any accidents or anomalies. It has been noted that the outer race and sleeve joint appears to be undisturbed, and therefore the ASB does not appear to apply to this accident.

The Up position of the switches is Off and Down position is On, except the GEN switch where Up is Reset and Middle is Off. The DIR GYRO/& ATT IND switch position just indicates whether the compass is in DG mode or Attitude mode.

JOSH BEE (FOREFLIGHT)

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I checked our system and we don't show any flight plans filed through ForeFlight for N8227J. I also checked our system for Timothy Lyons (plus other combinations of his name) and had no matches.

PETE LOPEZ (ERICKSON EMPLOYEE)

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I left Medford to meet up with Paul Wildgoose around 3:00-3:15. When I arrived at exit 6 where I met Paul and also met with the search and rescue crews, you could hardly see across the highway due to heavy fog. I would estimate about 300 ft visibility

PAUL WILDGOOSE (ERICKSON LEAD MECHANIC)

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The weather conditions on January/23/2019 on Mt Ashland at approximately 14:00. Heading south on I-5 going up to the summit from the chain-up area the Fog/Cloud was becoming very dense with approximately no more than 50 yards visibility and it was also sitting on the ground the lack of visibility was very poor till Mile Marker #2. At Mile Marker #2 looking North towards Mt Ashland the Fog/Cloud was coming over the summit at what seemed to be a very fast pace and the summit was not visible at all.

ERIK RAMSEYER AND MARTY CONROY

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The FAA interviewed a witness that observed the helicopter prior to impact. The witnesses stated that he watched the helicopter flying south at a low altitude. The helicopter approached a set of powerlines and briefly increased in altitude to maneuver over them.