



Record of Conversation

Fabian Salazar
Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Investigator in Charge

NTSB Accident Number: WPR20LA189
Aircraft Registration & Make/Model: SA-342J / N342J
Accident Location: Minden, NV
Accident Date: June 21, 2020

Keith Essex
Witness / Helicopter Pilot

In a telephone interview with Mr. Essex, he stated that he was at the Minden-Tahoe airport, outside of his hangar, working on a glider. He observed the accident helicopter depart about two hours earlier in the day. He was still outside when he heard it returning. He looked up to observe the helicopter in a normal approach profile. He stated that there was nothing wrong with the helicopter pilot's technique. He turned away to walk inside his hangar. Once inside the hangar, he said that he heard three to four pops occurring in rapid succession followed by a louder deeper sound. About three seconds later he heard a sound consistent with the helicopter hitting the ground very hard. He opened the door to his hangar to observe the helicopter on the ground and on fire. He ran to the helicopter and noticed a male had already exited the helicopter followed by a female. He observed the male had minor injuries and the female had difficulty standing due to an injury.

Mr. Essex stated that he was a helicopter pilot with about 12,000 hours in helicopters.