



## RECORD OF EMAIL

**Albert P. Nixon**  
**Senior Aviation Accident Investigator**  
**Western Pacific Region**

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**Date: July 24, 2020**  
**Person Contacted: David Hartson (FAA Aviation Safety Inspector)**  
**NTSB Accident Number: WPR20LA191**

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### **Narrative:**

On an email from David Hartson, the following is a summary of what he stated:

- The following are his notes from interviewing the witnesses.
- Ms. Dana M. Kimberly was driving north on Highway 41 and saw the helicopter go down. She thought it may have hit the power lines along the highway. It disappeared behind the roof of a barn for a moment, then she saw smoke and an explosion. Ms. Kimberly is a certified nursing assistant. When she got closer, she noticed people in the field and a man who looked burned. Both had gotten out by that point and the older man said they lost power but did not hit anything. She noticed that his skin was peeling off and his shirt caught on fire.
- Mr. Kenzo Mahara witnessed the helicopter accident. He was driving south on Highway 41 from Rathdrum and saw the helicopter coming from the east over the road at low altitude. He saw it hit the ground and it spun around when it hit. He said the fire started very shortly after impact, small at first, aft of the main rotor, but it quickly spread to the front and got much bigger. He stopped, got out of his car, and ran to the crash site to help the occupants get out of the helicopter, along with other passers-by. At first, he thought they were doing touch and go landings nearby but then the crash happened and when the fire started, he felt he had to act. Mr. Mahara said one of the occupants told him over and over that they were losing rpms.
- Mr. McLean was the person who first called 911 to report the accident. He was cutting hay in his swather in a field south of the crash site and saw the whole sequence of events. He witnessed the helicopter flying low over Meyer Avenue and then the crash. He stated he observed the helicopter was flying lower than the tall power lines along the roadway (east and west). It appears to him the tail of the helicopter was bobbing up and down and it did not seem to be

flying smoothly. Mr. Michael A. McLean thought the helicopter was going to hit the power lines along Highway 41 and saw a spark on the helicopter while it was still in the air. He saw no smoke. As the helicopter neared the ground, the tail swung around quickly then it impacted the ground. He stated he saw no smoke until the machine hit the ground, then estimated it was 90 seconds to two minutes before the flames engulfed the wreck. He was surprised to hear anyone got out alive. At the distance he was from the event, he was unable to get to the site but saw people had stopped to help.

- Mr. Michael Suhr was driving north on Highway 41 when he witnessed the subject helicopter "at power line level or just above it" headed west. The helicopter passed over the highway and after the crash ended up pointing east. He was "85% sure" he saw smoke prior to the crash. Mr. Suhr ran towards the wreck to help pull the two occupants out, who were already on fire. One person got out, was on fire, and ran to the other side of the machine to help get the other occupant out. Another bystander helped with the extraction as the occupant appeared to be having difficulty with the door. Mr. Suhr stated the "young guy" got out the south side and the older gentleman got out the north side (with the machine pointed west). Mr. Suhr stated he did not have to release the seat belts as they were already undone by the occupants. Both got out and both were on fire. Mr. Suhr is trained as an EMT, said they were both in shock and extremely thirsty, then they felt very hot then very cold.