

# PETER BARTLETT STATEMENT

## AIE DOG CAMP MANAGER

May 6:

From about 6am until noon the weather wasn't good in camp. It was cloudy, snowing and foggy. The visibility was a few hundred yards.

at noon the clouds broke, it stopped snowing and we could see all the way across the inlet through paradise valley. at that time we were informed that we were still cancelled because of the wind on the ground. The wind on the glacier was 10-15 mph.

At 4:30pm we were informed that we were going to start flying dogs. at about 5:15pm Chris arrived with the first set of dogs. The wind was 10-15 mph coming from the southeast. It was snowing lightly but you could still see into paradise valley. Chris mentioned it was quite bumpy coming up over the lake.

The next two flights of dogs came up with a little improvement in weather. It had stopped snowing and the wind was still 10-15 mph and we could still see across the inlet.

On the next flight of dogs, just before Chris landed, I radioed him and said the winds had increased to 20-30 mph and swirling in all directions. It also had begun snowing again. By the time Chris arrived that squall was over.

Just before the next set of dogs the winds were back up to 20-30 mph and it was snowing. The clouds had moved in covering the bluff, visibility was approximately a quarter mile looking down toward paradise valley. Chris landed and we unloaded dogs and Luther. Before Chris left he waved me over and told me that he is not coming back in this weather just for 10 dogs. I agreed and said I don't blame you, it is just 10 dogs we can do that anytime. I told him to be safe and he told me - but don't give up on me yet. He then picked up at 6:52 and headed toward paradise valley. He made it about 1/8 mile,

not even to snowcat site/the bluff. He then turned around and headed north toward our second site and up over our fourth site. Visibility from camp seemed to be about 1/4 mile to the north. The clouds/fog had been at our second site all day, they hadn't moved. The snow had picked up considerably and the winds were still 20-30 mph.

Three minutes had passed with no call from Chris inbound. I knew something was wrong. It was around that time that Kelly called Chris with no response. Approximately 8 minutes after Chris left camp, so about 7 pm, Kelly launched to look for him.

Sometime after 8:00 pm Kelly found the wreckage but couldn't get down to it. He asked if we could get there. I looked up at the second site and we had no visibility. I told him we would try until we had no visibility.

Myself, Nathan, Matt and Riley grabbed two snowmachines and rescue gear and headed up to the 4<sup>th</sup> site. Once we got between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> site the winds were probably 30-40 mph and visibility was between 0 and a few hundred feet and blowing snow. As we got to the edge of the 4<sup>th</sup> site, looking down the canyon we spotted the flashing light on Kelly's helicopter. It was about a mile away. The winds were 50-70 mph. We tried to make our way down but at one point it was too steep and there was avalanche danger. We were then informed that search and rescue were on their way. We came back to camp to pick them up in the snowcat and to ~~the~~ mark the trail up.

Riley and I went back up to mark the trail, By

the time we got to the 4<sup>th</sup> site the wind and snow were blowing so hard our tracks were covered within about 15 minutes. While we marked the trail, Nathan was driving the snowcats up with Search and Rescue. Because of snow, wind and darkness, the search and rescue team couldn't go any further than where we could take them. Our search was off at about 10:00 but the Coast Guard had arrived by then.

