

## **Inspector Statement**

January 18, 2018

Approximately 1030 MST

UNM Hospital, Albuquerque, NM

Vernon Rocket and I were sent to interview the sole survivor of the N658H helicopter accident in Raton, NM. At UNM Hospital, our first contact was Sarah Slomovic, a friend of the survivor, Andra Cobb. Ms Slomovic stated that she was a close friend of Ms Cobb. They grew up together since early childhood. Ms Slomovic stated that the aircraft from Houston was scheduled to arrive at Raton, NM around 1711 MST with passengers Paul Cobb, Andra Cobb, Charles Burrnett III, Roy Bennett and Heather Bennett. Ms Slomovic stated the group from Houston were planning a 50<sup>th</sup> birthday party for her on January 18<sup>th</sup> at Emery Gap Ranch, approximately 35 miles east of Raton. The group planned to return to Houston from Raton on the 19th. Ms Slomovic then introduced us to Ms Cobb.

Ms Cobb was alert and composed when we met her. She was asked to recall the day from leaving Houston. She stated that they boarded the private aircraft, a Hawker 800, N800GN in Houston, to arrive in Raton, NM where they would board a company helicopter and fly to Emery Gap Ranch to celebrate her friend's birthday and return on Friday.

Ms Cobb stated on the Hawker enroute to Raton, Paul Cobb, Andra's father, told her that there was a mechanical issue with the helicopter. She understood that Jamie Colman Dodd (J.C.), the pilot, replaced a bolt before departing for Raton from Trinidad, CO, where the helicopter is based. Ms Cobb stated that the helicopter was in Raton when the Hawker landed. She stated the five passengers and pilot boarded the helicopter. Paul Cobb was in the left front seat (copilot), J.C. Dodd (pilot) in the right front seat, MS Cobb was in the Right center seat, Charles Burnett III in the left center seat, Roy Bennett in the right rear seat and Heather Bennett in the left rear seat. Ms Cobb stated she had flown several times in the helicopter and had even taken two flight lessons in it. She stated the takeoff was normal. As they were flying east, the sun had gone down and the stars were very bright, there was no turbulence. She recalled they were in level flight. She could not see the altimeter from her seat. There were no unusual noises, she did not notice any warning light in the cockpit, the pilot and copilot were calm as everything was normal. Ms Cobb recalled a big bang as the helicopter hit the ground. She thought the left side hit first. After ground contact, the helicopter rolled forward coming to a stop upside down. Ms Cobb stated she was hanging in her seat by the seat belt, the door was gone and jet fuel was pouring on her. She released her seat belt and evacuated the helicopter. She stated the helicopter was on fire and explosions followed. She called 911 and waited for emergency responders.

Ms Cobb stated the helicopter was privately owned and not used commercially. She stated Ross Eliason from Houston was familiar with the maintenance of the helicopter. MS Cobb sustained a broken left shoulder and arm. She and Ms Slomovic planned to return to Houston in the Hawker from Albuquerque Thursday night or Friday.



Geary S. Monckton

Principal Maintenance Inspector

Albuquerque FSDO, AFG-200-SW01