

ATTACHMENT 1

Interview Summaries (3)

Interview:	Wife of Pilot, Father of Pilot, and other family members
Represented By:	Self
Date:	December 9, 2011
Time:	2030 Pst
Location:	Pilot's family home
Present:	Brenner, Allahyar, NTSB

The pilot's wife was interviewed at her home accompanied by members of her family. She was the primary person responding to questions but, in many cases, supporting information was provided by other family members present in the room. The following information was provided concerning the pilot and his activities:

Sunday, December 4, 2011

Sunday was the pilot's day off. They arose about 8:00 a.m. They went to Church about 9:00 a.m. until about 12:15. They spent several hours resting at home, had dinner at a family member's house, watched a movie at home, got the children ready for bed around 9:00 p.m. and went to bed themselves around 10:00 p.m.

Monday, December 5, 2011

Monday was also the pilot's day off. He woke up around 6:45 and walked their daughter to the bus stop. He returned for a nap, then got up and walked their son to the bus stop. He spent some time doing routine activities around the house. They went to bed around 10:00 p.m. Sometimes they did not sleep right away but they would stay up a little and talk for a few minutes as they did that evening.

Tuesday, December 6, 2011

The Pilot had to report to work early and did not get a chance to walk the kids to the bus stop. He may have arisen around 7:00 a.m. He came home after work and ate something. Then they went to church from 6:45 to 8:00 p.m., where he engaged in a ball game. When they returned home, he got the kids ready for bed around 9:00 p.m. and went to bed around 10:00 p.m.

Wednesday, December 7, 2011

He had checked his schedule via email the night before and learned that his scheduled first trip had no passengers and was cancelled. He got up in the morning and walked the kids to the bus stop, their daughter first, then their son. Pilot's wife was out of the house from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. for a medical appointment. He stayed home and engaged in some routine activities around the house. For lunch, he ate some fish and

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broccoli and made himself a ham sandwich as well. She returned around 11:00 a.m. She had babysitting that day which she did part time. The pilot helped her in changing and cleaning the baby. He then got ready for work but felt rushed. He did not change his epaulets as he had planned to do. His mood was OK but he was in a hurry.

She reported that he was a good sleeper. When he did not have work demands, he would normally go to bed by 2200 and awake about 0645 to get the children to school. His work demands were variable, however, and sometimes he arose by 0500 for work.

The pilot did not have any health issues. There were no changes in his health in the past 6 months although, during this time, he had intentionally lost 15-18 lbs. He always had extra sick days at work because he never called in sick.

In the past 12 months, there were no major changes in his financial situation. In the past 12 months, his personal life changed due to their marriage. They were engaged in March 2011 and married in June 2011. The pilot changed his diet when they began dating to lose some weight. When they got married she got sick and spent their honeymoon in the hospital. He lost additional weight while she was sick.

The pilot had good eyesight and did not wear glasses. He had good hearing. He never smoked tobacco, drank alcohol, or used drugs. He did not drink coffee and did not use any prescription medications.

He did not have any previous aviation accidents. He had never received discipline at work.

The pilot's father, who was also in aviation, explained that his son as a boy became interested in aviation through him. They used to do humanitarian flights out of Wyoming for Native Americans. His son met a helicopter pilot during a mission into the Grand Canyon and became intrigued. He completed helicopter lessons as a civilian putting himself through school. He trained at Silver State Helicopter School in Las Vegas, and then flew in Florida and New York building up flight hours. He received his instructor pilot's certificate from Silver State. All of his flight hours were on helicopters. The pilot's father always emphasized the importance of safety to his son when it came to flying. His wife added that the pilot's goal was to one day own his own helicopter and fly sightseeing flights in Utah.

The pilot was preparing for annual examinations at the time of the accident. He had completed one exam and was preparing for the second.

On one occasion, they were out on an evening and she expressed interest in staying out somewhat later. However, contrary to her wishes, the pilot insisted that they

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leave early because he had an early flight and needed to get his proper rest. He always wanted to be safe and at his top form for his passengers.

She flew twice with the pilot. He discussed with her what emergency landing would be like and what needed to be done. He talked about how emergencies would be handled and how the helicopter would be brought down safely. He mentioned that there was an area near Hoover dam where there was no place to land. She also said that he always did his best for his passengers to enjoy their flight and be safe. He loved to fly and wanted to stay with Sundance because it was a stable company and would allow him to live comfortably. He would not fly for other companies even though they paid better. In his mind, they were not economically as secure as Sundance.

His brother-in-law added that for a period of time, the pilot lived and worked with him and his sister. He operated heavy equipment and helped them remodel their house. He was always a happy and hard working person, with good habits. He took good care of himself. He slept as much as he could and was very conscientious. He wouldn't overlook things. He would always put others first.

About a week prior to the accident, the company had changed a procedure with their radio frequency that the pilot thought was not working well. The pilot told Burl about a better way to implement the change. Burl was unreceptive and the pilot was sad when he came home. But the next day, an email went out to everyone at the company with the new change (the pilot's suggestions). At the end of the email, Burl acknowledged this was not his idea, but it was good and that made the pilot happy.

The pilot had told her that sometimes helicopters had mechanical issues but kept flying. He had mentioned a pilot had a problem in flight but made it back. He had talked about leaks noting that, if they would fall in the engine, it could be catastrophic. He once had a bad dream he had to do a preflight on a helicopter to uncover a hidden problem in it. Following the accident, his wife found a picture of a 2010 report on his computer about a problem with a helicopter written by another pilot (further investigation of this document revealed the log sheet was used for training purposes).

When asked if the pilot had things he disliked about Sundance, his wife indicated he did not. He did not complain about the company and was grateful for the job. When asked if he was ever worried for his safety, she indicated that he was not. He never worried about getting in trouble due to mechanical issues in the helicopter. He was very meticulous, spoke with mechanics, and did thorough pre-flights.

The investigators read an e-mail that the family received after the accident from a family in England who had flown with the pilot in October 2011. The e-mail expressed condolences and the family's excellent experience with the pilot as both a person and pilot.

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Interview:	Barry Trotter party Previous tour passengers
Represented By:	Self
Date:	December 10, 2011
Time:	0930 Pst
Location:	Excalibur Hotel, Las Vegas
Present:	Brenner, Allahyar, NTSB

A group interview was conducted of six tourists from Great Britain who flew in the accident helicopter on the last tourist flight prior to the accident. The six guests, sitting in one of their hotel rooms, collectively answered the questions. Mr. Barry Trotter was the main contact and the group consisted of him, members of his family, and family friends. They provided the following information:

They were picked up at their hotel on Wednesday December 7th for the picnic tour. They arrived at the site and registered. As part of their registration and introduction each were weighed, were informed about security, given the safety briefing cards, and asked to watch the safety DVD in the departure lounge. They met with the captain of their tour, Landon Nield, in the departure lounge where all six were escorted to the helicopter.

They then said that their captain took them on a pre-determined route. He was very nice and seemed capable. They flew to the Grand Canyon for the picnic tour. During the trip, their captain was in a good mood, happy, and chatty. He answered their questions about how he put himself through school to learn to fly and get his license and that his operating license is good for life and would only be revoked due to committing an illegal operation or health issues. He shared with them that he had been at the job for about a couple of years. Prior to becoming a pilot, he was a lorry driver. He was originally from Utah, where he and his father trained horses. He was knowledgeable about the reservation and the tribes in the area. He said he provided 2 flights per year for the tribes for the assessment of the reservation. He discussed the rules of not smoking on the tribal land. During the picnic he offered his tour guests champagne; however, they were not interested and he put it away. He was very helpful throughout the picnic tour.

On their way back, the two guests sitting in the front, swapped with two of the guests in the back for viewing pleasure. During their flight, their captain gave them a demo of the controls by telling them how an input in one area will require compensating and adjustment in another area of the controls. He showed them pedal inputs, pitch and yaw, minor turns, and "gently" dropping the nose. At no time did he make any of them

feel unsafe. He seemed to have very good control over the helicopter. He genuinely loved what he did. It was a very gentle landing.

Prior to landing, he reminded them not to open the doors and that he will take care of that when it's safe and not to be outside of the helicopter when the helicopter rotors are running. He opened the door for his passengers. As they were walking back to the lounge, one of the guests noticed the pilot give a hand signal to the fueler of 4 and 0. The guest assumed he was referring to gallons of fuel. In the lounge, they shook hands with their pilot and said goodbye.

When asked to further describe their experience with the pilot and the flight, they said the weather was clear, with no winds, and no bumps. Throughout the flight, they never sensed any mishandling or "misbehaving" of the helicopter. They noticed their captain adjusting the radio frequency. He explained to them what he was doing. He also explained some of the other control buttons on the control panel. He seemed very knowledgeable. He was in a fine mood and had an upbeat, dry wit that made them all feel secure. He told aviation stories during the flight and answered questions about aviation. They asked if he had another tour afterwards, he indicated that he did, and that on certain days he had as many as 4 to 5 flights per day which could add up to a day as long as 10 hours.

When they initially boarded the helicopter he provided a safety briefing that discussed items such as seatbelts, doors, and over water issues. His demeanor was not robotic but rather conversational. He meticulously checked everyone's seat belt and safety pouches and helped them secure them. He made them feel very comfortable. The flight was routine. The only thing that stood out for one of the passengers was that their pilot did not wear sunglasses and, when leaving the canyon, the sun was directly ahead. Their pilot later told them that he had a sunscreen filter but it had been misplaced. The motions of the helicopter were never aggressive. When showing how the controls worked, his motions were very gentle and he was perfectly in control. He seemed fresh and in good spirits. He was well groomed with a white shirt, smart trousers, new epaulets, and short hair combed.

The Trotter party was scheduled to return home to England the following day and agreed to e-mail digital copies to the NTSB of all photographs of the accident helicopter and pilot taken during their trip.

Interview:	Tom Schaus Charter Manager
Represented By:	Self
Date:	January 11, 2012
Time:	1630 Pst
Location:	Sundance Helicopters, Inc.
Present:	Allahyar, Dunks, NTSB

The purpose of the meeting was explained to Mr. Schaus. The intent was to learn about the practices and procedures of the company for drug and alcohol screening of the safety-sensitive employees. Mr. Schaus was the Charter Manager and oversaw Sundance's drug and alcohol screening program.

Mr. Schaus explained that Sundance had a full FAA-approved drug and alcohol testing program. This was their own program and they did not use consortium. However, it was FAA-approved and in compliance with DOT drug regulations. They conducted pre-employment, random, reasonable cause, and post-accident testing. They performed follow up and return to duty evaluation if an employee would test positive. For pre-employment of pilots and mechanics, they tested for marijuana, cocaine, opiates, PCP, and amphetamines.

Post-employment, they conducted random screening for drugs and alcohol for pilots and mechanics. Tests were performed 4 times throughout the year at different times during the quarters. The testing level at the time was 25 percent of the number of people in their program for drugs and 10 percent for alcohol. He used a random number generator to select the employees for testing. He explained that generally, in the neighborhood of four to six drug tests and two to three alcohol tests were performed every quarter. He believed that at the time, there were about 70 employees in the program with the number increasing to about 80 in the summer season. He stated that if an individual was tested positive, they were immediately stood down. If on duty, they would be pulled off duty and would not be permitted to work safety-sensitive position or possibly even continue to work for the company. If the company decided to keep them employed, the individual had to go to a substance abuse professional and complete specific programs. There would also be follow up tests for the individual as recommended by the substance abuse professional.

Mr. Schaus explained that all mechanics were tested randomly as would the mechanics who performed the maintenance on the accident helicopter; however, he would have had to review his records to which ones had been tested.

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Mr. Schaus explained that the crew who performed the maintenance on the accident helicopter was not given a post-accident test. He stated that because the accident took place about 24 hours after the maintenance was performed on the helicopter, and the team of mechanics who performed the maintenance was not working that day, no drug testing was requested. He, the Director of Maintenance, and the CEO of the company met after the accident to discuss the situation. Because maintenance was performed on the helicopter the night before, the program manager raised the question on whether the mechanics that had performed the 100 hour inspection should be tested. However, since the aircraft had flown 3 flights post-maintenance, they felt the accident was not a maintenance related issue and opted out of screening the maintenance crew. He stated that their interpretation of the regulation was that it did not apply at that time.

In response to implementing any changes or new recommendations for drug testing post-accident in the future, the program manager thought the company would continue to treat it the same as they had done with this accident. They would make an evaluation at the time of the accident to see if it was necessary and then if it was possible to do the test.