

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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AIR METHODS CORPORATION
LIFENET HELICOPTER ACCIDENT
AUGUST 26, 2011
NEAR MOSBY, MISSOURI

Docket No.: CEN11FA599

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Interview of: CHRISTIAN CARTER

Via Telephone

Monday,
October 10, 2011

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice.

BEFORE: MALCOLM BRENNER, Ph.D.
Senior Human Performance Investigator

APPEARANCES:

JIM SILLIMAN, Investigator-in-Charge
National Transportation Safety Board
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1 I N T E R V I E W

2 DR. BRENNER: Chris, can you hear me okay?

3 MS. CARTER: I can.

4 DR. BRENNER: Great. As well here. My name is Malcolm
5 Brenner, and I'm with the National Transportation Safety Board.
6 I'm a human performance investigator and I'm supporting the
7 investigator-in-charge of the accident who is also on the line,
8 Jim Silliman.

9 And is it okay, we'd like to tape record just so we can
10 take accurate notes later. Would that be okay with you?

11 MS. CARTER: That's fine.

12 DR. BRENNER: Okay. Thank you very much.

13 INTERVIEW OF CHRISTIAN CARTER

14 BY DR. BRENNER:

15 Q. And I understand that -- you know, the purpose of the
16 NTSB is to try to find out what factors are involved in accidents,
17 what's the probable cause of the accident, and then to make
18 recommendations to prevent it from happening again. And so, we're
19 not a regulatory authority. We're not a law enforcement
20 authority. Basically, we're working with industry to try to
21 prevent it from happening.

22 And I understand that you were present on the day that
23 this happened. I'd appreciate if you could just tell us what
24 happened, anything you saw or heard about?

25 A. Not really. It was just kind of a normal routine for a

1 transfer.

2 Q. Um-hum. Well, how did you first become involved with
3 the transfer?

4 A. I was the RN in the ER with the patient.

5 Q. Um-hum. Okay. And then did you see the crew from the
6 transfer flight?

7 A. I did. I gave them a report, yeah.

8 Q. Who did you see?

9 A. I seen the medic and the RN.

10 Q. Were you familiar with them; had you met them before?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Both of them?

13 A. I do believe, yes. I know Mr. Beavers [sic] I
14 definitely have, and I do believe I had ran into Chris a couple
15 times.

16 Q. Okay. And tell me what the interaction was like?

17 A. It was just a normal report to the nurses about the
18 patient, and everybody was chipper and happy and --

19 Q. How could you tell they were chipper and happy?

20 A. We joke around when we transfer patients.

21 Q. Um-hum. Do you remember what you were talking about,
22 what kind of jokes?

23 A. No. Just how it was, and I said -- we talked about it
24 being a good night and I told them I was leaving to go home.

25 Q. Oh, I see, yeah. You're at the end of your shift, yeah.

1 A. End of my shift, yes.

2 Q. Okay. How long did it take them to get the patient
3 ready and move her out?

4 A. Not really very long at all, probably within 15 minutes
5 -- 10 minutes, 10, 15 minutes.

6 Q. Um-hum. Okay. And then once they transferred the
7 patient, did you have any further contact with them?

8 A. No.

9 Q. Well, while they were there, did they talk about the
10 flight at all? Like, I guess, they talked about the nice weather
11 it was. Was there anything about the chopper or anything about
12 the flight?

13 A. Nope.

14 Q. And to whatever extent you can say, any discussion about
15 the patient or anything unusual the patient would need?

16 A. No.

17 Q. Okay.

18 DR. BRENNER: Jim, did you have questions?

19 MS. CARTER: What'd you say?

20 DR. BRENNER: Oh, I'm sorry. I'm talking to Jim
21 Silliman. Jim, did you have any questions?

22 MR. SILLIMAN: Yeah.

23 BY MR. SILLIMAN:

24 Q. So, you don't go out to meet the helicopter, then;
25 you're still with the patients there in the emergency room?

1 A. I did not go out and meet the helicopter, no. The ward
2 clerk took the cart out.

3 Q. Okay. So, then they're bringing the cart in with the
4 ward clerk. And as soon as they get into the ER, then, then their
5 attention refocuses to getting the patient and that's where you
6 kind of picked up with the flight nurse and -- or -- yeah, the
7 flight nurse and flight paramedic?

8 A. Um-hum, yeah.

9 Q. And your attention was basically of getting the patient
10 ready for transfer, then?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. So, there's no conversations about the helicopter or the
13 pilot or anything unusual about the flight; you were just talking
14 about the patient, is that correct?

15 A. That's correct.

16 Q. And once they have the patient on the gurney and ready
17 to go out to the helicopter, did you follow them out of the
18 emergency room or do you stay in the emergency room?

19 A. No, I follow them out.

20 Q. How far do you go out with them, right to the
21 helicopter?

22 A. Yes. I help -- I make sure the patient gets loaded
23 fine.

24 Q. Okay. So, they bring the gurney out. Do they transfer
25 the person from the gurney onto the bed of the helicopter's thing

1 or do they take the gurney with them?

2 A. We take our gurney out with their immobilizer board.

3 Q. Um-hum.

4 A. And then they take that off the gurney and load them
5 into the helicopter.

6 Q. Okay. And that's -- all right. So, they -- then they
7 -- the patient's on the board, then, and then they put them on the
8 litter, I guess, in the helicopter. And do you watch them hook up
9 the monitoring devices or are the monitoring devices to the
10 patient already on the patient when they get in?

11 A. They -- when they come into the hospital, they hook the
12 patient up to all their stuff in the hospital.

13 Q. Okay. So, then there's the transfer of the patient onto
14 the litter and then the monitoring devices are also transferred
15 back into the helicopter?

16 A. That's correct.

17 Q. And the helicopter is shut down during that whole
18 process, isn't it?

19 A. Yes, it is.

20 Q. Okay. And you're observing so that the patient gets in.
21 Do you watch them, I guess, strap the patient into the litter so
22 that they have like the safety harness or belts on the patient; do
23 you observe that as well?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. So, when -- so, you actually say, okay, this patient is

1 ready -- you've done everything you can, you've secured the
2 patient to the litter, all your monitoring devices are all set.
3 The flight nurse and flight paramedic, they're in the helicopter
4 by that time as well, then, and seated before you leave?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Okay. During any of that time, did you say anything to
7 the pilot or did the pilot say anything to you?

8 A. I don't believe so. I might've said hi, but no -- no, I
9 didn't make conversation with him.

10 Q. Okay. Did the pilot -- do you remember if the pilot
11 made any conversation with the flight nurse or flight paramedic
12 while they're getting the patient strapped into the litter?

13 A. He did talk to them, but I don't remember. I think it
14 was just about -- I think he helped pull the -- he was sitting up
15 front and I think he just helped kind of secure the board onto the
16 litter thing, the bed thing.

17 Q. And I suppose just kind of with his left hand just kind
18 of guiding it or something, or helping strap things down --

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. -- something like that? So, he didn't talk about the
21 flight -- or the condition of the helicopter or the flight or
22 anything of that nature, then, while you were there?

23 A. No, he did not.

24 Q. Okay. Did the -- do you remember which seat was Randy
25 Beaver sitting next to or sitting in front of, by the head of the

1 patient, do you remember? Or was he -- or is that Chris? Do you
2 remember that at all?

3 A. I -- nope, I don't remember.

4 Q. Okay. And do you remember, do they get seated and seat-
5 belted in before you left or are they still getting their stuff --

6 A. No, I don't -- because I have to clear away from the
7 chopper, so --

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. -- once they're in, I am at a safe distance away.

10 Q. Okay. So once this pilot -- or the patient was strapped
11 in on the litter and everything looked like it was ready to go for
12 the patient, then you walked away from the helicopter and observed
13 from a safe distance, then?

14 A. Yes. I actually just went back inside the ER and I was
15 clocking out to leave from work.

16 Q. Okay. And I guess the helicopter departed soon after
17 that, then?

18 A. Yeah. I didn't watch it take off.

19 Q. Did you hear it, the motors turning up or the rotors
20 turning or anything like that before you clocked out, or --

21 A. Yeah, I'm sure I heard it take off, but I didn't watch
22 it. But I'm sure I had to be out there near the garage when they
23 were starting it up.

24 Q. Sure. Well, that's very helpful information. I really
25 appreciate that.

1 MR. SILLIMAN: Malcolm, I can't think of anything else
2 to ask at this time.

3 BY DR. BRENNER:

4 Q. I guess it would help me, can you give a time estimate?
5 Once the patient is strapped in and you move away, how long is it
6 then until the helicopter takes off?

7 A. Oh, like, within just a couple minutes.

8 Q. Um-hum. Is there anything else that might help us that
9 we failed to ask you?

10 A. Nope. The only thing that I did notice, like I remember
11 -- and I don't even know if I thought it was odd until I found out
12 the helicopter crashed. I had never really seen the pilot. He
13 was new to me. And when I walked out there, he was looking at a
14 map. And that's the only thing that I thought was maybe a little
15 -- I've just never really seen the pilots looking at the map.

16 Q. What was his mood like, any idea?

17 A. No. He was -- he didn't appear un-normal [sic] to me.

18 Q. Did he seem concerned?

19 A. I don't know if he -- I don't know. No, because when I
20 walked out there, he like kind of folded the map back up and just
21 put it up. And I just thought it was kind of odd that, you know,
22 I never really seen the pilots looking at the maps.

23 Q. Yeah. Um-hum. Great. Well, I think that covers all
24 our questions. And even stuff that seems very routine to you is
25 very informative to us. It closes up areas that they're just as

1 valuable as other areas. So, thank you very much for being
2 available and taking the time to talk with us.

3 A. Yes, thank you.

4 MR. SILLIMAN: Yeah. Thank you very much, appreciate
5 it.

6 MS. CARTER: Thank you.

7 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: AIR METHODS CORPORATION
 LIFENET HELICOPTER ACCIDENT
 AUGUST 26, 2011
 NEAR MOSBY, MISSOURI
 Interview of Christian Carter

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PLACE: Via Telephone

DATE: October 10, 2011

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been compared to
the recording.

Joseph M. Parent
Transcriber