



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

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Date: 11/27/18
Person Contacted: Scott Blakeslee – Front Left Seat Passenger
NTSB Accident Number: WPR18FA077

Narrative:

Mr. Blakeslee reported that the pilot was the CEO of their company and had talked about flying up to see him or lunch in Catalina. He recalled that a few emails were changed between the pilot, himself, and one of his other counterparts, coordinating a day for the flight. The day of the accident, he worked from home that morning, and was supposed to arrive at the pilot's office at 1130, but showed up early, around 1115. Mr. Blakeslee said that the pilot showed up 30 to 45 minutes later, and they got in his car and headed to the airport. At one point during the drive to the airport, the pilot received a phone call, during which he looked frustrated. Following the completion of the call, the pilot mentioned that it wasn't the helicopter he wanted.

Mr. Blakeslee said that they arrived at the airport, it was great day, nice weather, calm wind, and that he was nervous, and the other two passengers were excited. He recalled that the pilot was talking to someone in a flight suit, and then went in and looked inside the cockpit. The other two passengers were already getting into the helicopter, and he texted his wife saying he was nervous. He estimated that about 15 to 20 minutes later, he got into the helicopter, and saw the pilot going through checklists, as they put on the headsets. Following the engine start, Mr. Blakeslee wasn't sure, but thinks it had to do with lift, as it looked similar to the emergency brake in a car. The pilot was manipulating that lever, and the helicopter started to lift up, shimmied a little, lifted up, continued to go up, moving slowly up and to the left. Once they were at a pretty good altitude, the pilot started to turn left away from the airport and continued to climb turn a little to the left. Mr. Blakeslee said that during this time, nothing seemed out of the ordinary.

Mr. Blakeslee stated that the next thing he knew, the helicopter was dropping straight down, at almost a 90-degree angle. He recalled that the helicopter dropped for 3 seconds or so, and he braced for impact as the helicopter impacted the ground.

When asked about the activities prior to the flight, and if the pilot had asked them about weights or assigned them seats, Mr. Blakeslee stated that the pilot had never asked them about weights, nor assigned them seats. He recalled that the pilot was engaged in his checklist and talking to another gentlemen. He also recalled that one of the two passengers didn't care where he set, however, he and one other passenger decided to switch seats on the return flight.

Mr. Blakeslee estimated that at the time of the accident, he weighed about 168 pounds.