



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

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General Aviation Accident Division

Date: 10/3/2018
Person Contacted: Troy Bush (Pilot)
NTSB Accident Number: GAA18CA571

Narrative:

The following is a synopsis of the information provided by the pilot in a telephone conversation on this date:

- About 1430 mountain time, a notification for a patient with a head injury in Ruidoso came through for the crew.
- There was "yellow" weather, low ceiling from the past week. He checked weather before affirming acceptance of mission. Weather was green as stated in Skyvector.com- VFR in area of flight. The formal briefing received regarding location and patient was limited to crew briefing in the morning for on shift; 48 hours shifts, every 12 hours...regarding weather and forecasting; anticipated problems with the aircraft, if any were relayed. He did not compute the HIGE, HOGE, and density altitude for the landing site.
- Accepted flight and notified dispatched as well. He asked for the destination and was told that it was El Paso Texas. Did calculation for mileage for fuel from "Ski Apache" to El Paso. He added 40 gallons of fuel. He recalculated weight and compared to max gross weight via max litter weight with fuel needed then calc patient. He stated he was within the max gross weight.
- Exact coordinates received were further than anticipated to Ski Apache. Inbound flight about 40 mins. He was looking for landing zone starting 10 miles out visually and via GPS but realized it was not at Ruidoso (Sierra Blanca Regional: SRR) so they went up the mountain towards Ski Apache to the north.
- Normal accent over the mountain and while enroute, asked for ambulance location but had no communications with ground using the frequency provided prior to takeoff.
- Came around peak, toward the east of the valley (south side of peak) where he saw a resort building, large parking lot, with ambulance and ground crew. He perceived to land "on me" when saw hands raised on the ground.

- Looked at power setting and anticipated to land on large parking spot but was lined approach phase, in decent, between parking lot to the right. Then about 70 ft above the zip line cables, the color contrast change and he visually picked up thick zip line cables. He then informed the crew that the wires were below the helicopter. He decided to go-around, simultaneously watching out for the wires.
- Pulled power over wires to clear tail, then lowered collective, due to a slight droop in rotor speed. Then interpreted that the winds were light and variable so he made a left turn about 90° and moved LZ further east on dirt road and slightly nosed into the LZ.
- He was asked why he decided to turn the helicopter versus completing the go-around, he stated that he looked towards the east at their current heading and saw a trees that would not be ideal for an emergency landing site if they lost engine power. He could not further explain why he decided to turn the helicopter and in hind sight, he would have continued the go-around.
- During the approach, he realized the rate of decent was faster than normal and believed it was due to the density altitude. He realized he did not have sufficient power to cushion the landing about 20 ft above ground level.
- A Lard steel cable around edge of parking lot was seen and he held present heading and direction and decided to apply left pedal to not strike the cable. The helicopter settled to the ground and bounced, turned 180 east then slide down embankment, left stinger and left skid contacted the ground.
- Commanded evacuation and shutdown. After, he checked for fuel leaks and notified department and gathered crew for injury assessments
- The pilot stated that almost all his helicopter flight experience was at sea level, less the one high altitude training flight completed with the operator, at an airport with an elevation of 6,800 ft. The accident flight was his second flight at higher altitudes.