

## KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI, POLICE DEPARTMENT

## STATEMENT

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SUPP.# 95-087542

STATEMENT OF Gale Eugene Williams, TAKEN AT 1880 E. 63rdMetro Property Crimes Section, BY Det. Terry FordON THIS 10th DAY OF Aug.1995 AT 1600 HOURS.My name is Gale Eugene Williams, W/M, [REDACTED], I am 49 years of age,having been born in Fort Riley, Kan., I live at [REDACTED]Grandview, Mo. 64030, Phone Number [REDACTED]Employed: Rocky Mountain Helicopters, 1000 Carondlet, Kansas City, Mo. 64114, [REDACTED]

Q.--Mr. Williams you have stated that on 7-27-95 at approximately 11:50 p.m. you were at the Downtown Airport, Executive Beechcraft where you witnessed the incident involving a Kansas City, Mo. police helicopter, #643KC. Will you relate to me what you observed?

A.--I am a mechanic for the Rocky Mountain Helicopter Co. and have been so employed for the past fifteen years. I was at the Downtown Airport waiting for a St. Joseph Hospital helicopter to land for maintenance. At about 11:45 p.m. I observed the police helicopter land. At that time I was inside the building. I could see the helicopter land just outside the door. There were two officers in the aircraft. One of them got out and walked into the building and then walked to the pilot's lounge. The other officer stayed in the aircraft. The rotors were turning on the aircraft at an idle or a little bit above. About three or four minutes later the officer who had gone into the pilot's lounge came out and walked back outside and got into the aircraft. He got in on the left side of the helicopter. Then the other officer got out and walked into the building and then went toward the direction of the lounge. I should mention that when the first officer walked back outside I followed him out of the building. About two minutes after I walked outside several business people came out of the building at Beech Executive and walked toward a corporate jet which was parked on the other side of the police helicopter. The pilot of the police helicopter throttled up and repositioned his aircraft just to the north of where he was parked. The reason I believed he did this was to clear the way for the business people to get to their jet. The helicopter appeared to lift off the parking area normally and hovered to the second location. Everything looked normal to me as he landed from the hover. The pilot then lowered the collective and at about the time he reduced the RPMs. At that time the aircraft started to enter into ground resonance. I could hear the pilot apply power and collective. The aircraft swung about 20 degrees to the left with the nose a little above level. The aircraft was less than a foot off the ground when I started hearing loud noises. It sounded like the main rotor blade striking the tailboom. Within seconds the aircraft was back on the ground with the left side striking the ground first. Pieces of the aircraft was sliding across the parking area away from the aircraft. The engine quit and I then approached the aircraft to see if the pilot was injured. I ask the pilot if he was ok and he stated that he was

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Q.--Mr. Williams did you notice the position or angle of the main rotor disc just prior to the aircraft starting to vibrate?

A.--The rotor disc appeared to be level.

Q.--Mr. Williams did you observe the position or the angle of the main rotor disc make any abrupt changes just prior to the aircraft starting to vibrate?

A.--It appeared to remain level until he tried to liftoff and then the front of the disc appeared to rise and then the aircraft lifted off nose high and yawed to the left.

Q.--Mr. Williams could you observe the pilot from your position?

A.--It was dark. I could not see him clearly but I could see him.

Q.--Mr. Williams did you see the pilot make any abrupt movements of the flight controls just prior to the aircraft starting into the vibration?

A.--I did not see him make any abrupt movements before the vibration started.

Q.--Mr. Williams based on your experience as a helicopter mechanic are you familiar with the condition known as ground resonance?

A.--Yes sir.

Q.--Mr. Williams are you familiar with situations which cause ground resonance?

A.--Yes sir.

Q.--Mr. Williams in your opinion did this aircraft get into the condition known as ground resonance?

A.--Yes sir.

Q.--Mr. Williams did you hear or observe anything that could of cause the aircraft to enter ground resonance?

A.--I heard or observed nothing which would cause ground resonance.

Q.--Mr. Williams is there anything else you wish to add to this statement?

A.--From my experience I could not find fault in any of the pilot's actions. By the time the pilot had sufficient power for liftoff the aircraft was shaking violently.

Q.--Mr. Williams will you read and sign this statement consisting of two type written pages because it is the truth?

A.--Yes I will.

WITNESS: Det. [Signature]WITNESS: [Signature]SIGNED: [Signature]

Phone conversation with Gale Williams

The pilot had the aircraft on the ground for a couple of seconds at least. The pilot had just started to reduce power when ground resonance started.

It wasn't bouncing up and down, but oscillating to each corner of the skids (slightly) It progressively worsened within 2 to 3 seconds before the pilot applied power.

Power applies (2800-3100 rpm's). A/C started coming up .5 - 1 second, nose came up first. It was well into ground resonance when lifting off the ground.

Nose went up 20 degrees- above level, less that a foot off the ground.

Left gear came down-continues swinging-blade hit tail boom. The nose swerved 30 - 40 degrees to left. 2nd blade hit tail boom. Blades did at least 1 revolution, 2 - 3 revolutions likely. Pilot shut down a/c when tailboom was struck.

The blades were in flat pitch position. No change in blade path. The blade path was level with the ground. It didn't pitch forward or back, left of right, as far as witness could see.