



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

James Bledsoe
Air Safety Investigator
Western Pacific Region – Accident WPR22LA066

Date: 1/3/2022
Person Contacted: Balloon Pilot – Kyle Laxton

Narrative:

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

I was forwarded the NTSB 6120.1 form from investigator Zoe Keller on December 30th 2021. I reviewed the report and placed it in the accident file and determined a couple of follow up questions were needed. I spoke with Mr. Laxton who was very polite and courteous.

He confirmed the injury to his passenger.

He said that while analyzing the accident sequence he determined to make the following change to mitigate future injuries. In addition to a preflight passenger briefing, he now conducts an approach briefing to refresh procedures for less experienced passengers. The approach briefing reminds the passengers of the imminent landing and to prepare for a potential high wind landing.

Like other balloon pilots, Mr. Laxton briefs passengers to bend their knees to cushion the impact. Since this sort of injury has happened before we discussed the possibility of implementing a procedural change for high wind landings. In addition to bending at the knee, the passengers should keep their feet and knees together to stabilize those joints from sprains or fractures. This was discussed as it is a common practice for military parachutists. It is unknown/undetermined if this course of action would mitigate balloon related injuries. Recommend forwarding this issue to the Balloon operators associations to further study.

//nothing follows//