



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Samantha Link
Aviation Accident Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Date: May 8, 2019
Person Contacted: Ms. Lisa Kartchner (Witness)
NTSB Accident Number: WPR19FA123

Narrative:

During a telephone conversation with Ms. Kartchner she reported the following:

She was standing on the driveway of a home when she heard the helicopter flying overhead. Her attention was drawn to it because it sounded low and it was very loud. She looked up and she did not see the helicopter due to the heavy cloud cover; she assumed the helicopter was either in or above the clouds. At this moment nothing sounded out of the ordinary, it was just loud. About 10 seconds later she heard what sounded like metal hitting metal "clank clank clank." Then it sounded as if there was a ripping of metal. One second later she observed a piece of the helicopter falling below the clouds. It looked similar to a tail rotor blade except there was a long metal piece extending from one side of it. The piece spiraled down on an angle, in kind of an elliptical pattern. She never saw the helicopter, but she knew something terrible had happened. She went into the house to tell her family and they prayed. Shortly thereafter, they left the house to go to an appointment, and they observed the helicopter burning in the street.

Investigator's note: Below is a map of where Ms. Kartchner was standing in relation to the helicopter's flight path.

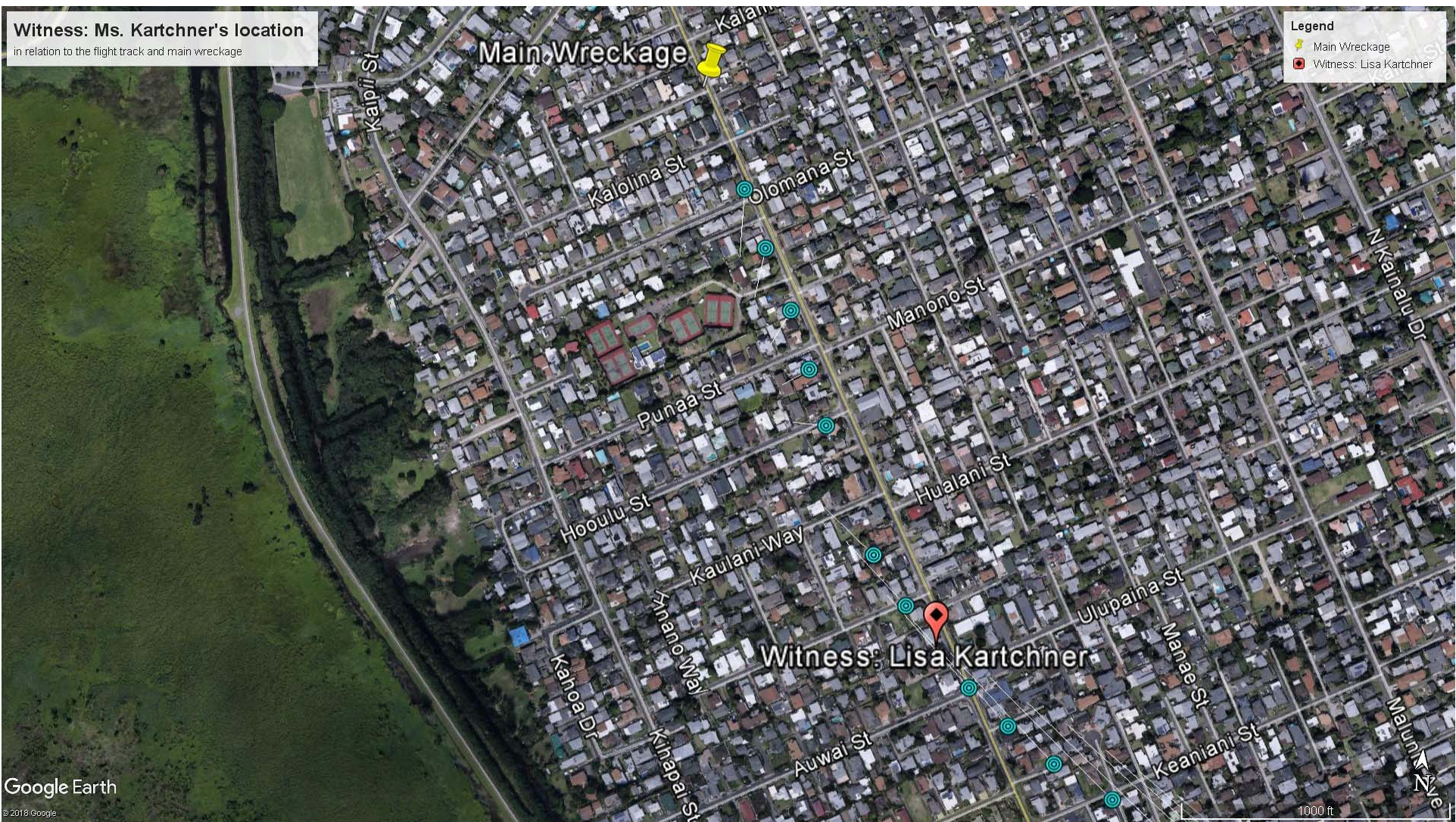
END.

Submitted by: Samantha Link

Witness: Ms. Kartchner's location
in relation to the flight track and main wreckage

Legend

- Main Wreckage
- Witness: Lisa Kartchner





WITNESS STATEMENT (EMAIL)

Samantha Link
Aviation Accident Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Date: April 30, 2019
Person Contacted: Maya Abdulkarim
NTSB Accident Number: WPR19FA123

Narrative:

Ms. Abdulkarim reported the following in an email:

At approximately 9:10 AM I was on my back lanai with my dogs and checking emails on my phone. The clouds were starting to come in over the mountains, but it wasn't raining yet. I heard a helicopter flying overhead and thought to myself that it's flying a little low. It flew over my house heading from Kailua Beach towards Kaneohe bay in a north west direction. At this point I still had not looked up. I heard it kind of sputter or stutter and then I heard a loud backfiring noise. It was not extremely loud, but it was very clear and distinct noise and it did not sound like a normal helicopter sound. The sound was similar to a motorcycle backfiring or a thunder clap. As soon as I heard the backfire I looked up and the aircraft was directly in my line of sight, to the right of my house. I saw it very clearly start to pitch forward and tilt to one side and go in a nosedive, cockpit first. I also saw a separate piece of the rotor blade that had detached or broken off from the main body of the aircraft and it was also falling from the sky to the left of where the helicopter was. What was left of the top blade that was still attached to the helicopter was not spinning or moving and the helicopter went into free fall. It appeared as if nothing was moving or working and it had just stopped mid air and started falling. I also noticed that immediately after I heard the backfire, the aircraft was silent. There was no helicopter noise.

From where I live I couldn't really tell the color of the aircraft, but there was a little bit of cloud cover so it looked somewhat gray to me, but that could have been the clouds. I did not see any flames or smoke coming from the aircraft as it went down. There were no other aircraft of any kind within my line of sight or in close proximity to the helicopter. The cockpit and tail of the aircraft were intact while in the air and as it fell. I did not see any major pieces of debris come off but was very focused on the main body of the aircraft as it came down. I didn't hear the crash or see an explosion, so I was unsure if what I saw was correct. I decided it's better to be safe than sorry, so I called 911 at exactly 9:11 am.

END.

Submitted by: Samantha Link



WITNESS STATEMENT (EMAIL)

Samantha Link
Aviation Accident Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Date: May 19, 2019
Person Contacted: Mr. Peter DeMoore
NTSB Accident Number: WPR19FA123

Narrative:

My wife and I were in our kitchen the morning of the helicopter crash and heard a helicopter fly very low over our house. About an hour later we heard that a helicopter had crashed about a mile away that killed three people. The location of the crash was consistent with the direction that we heard the low flying helicopter travel. Our vacation home is on the beach in Kailua, so we are accustomed to tourist helicopters, but they are usually at high altitude (1,000' +/-) and typically off shore a mile or more. The sound of this helicopter made us believe that it was very low and passing in very close proximity to our house, which was beyond unusual. While we did not see the helicopter, I can't stress enough how low it sounded. The thought of going outside to see the low flying helicopter crossed my mind, but I quickly realized that I wouldn't see anything because of the low altitude, speed and view obstructions. I must also add that I do not recall hearing any engine abnormalities. The speed of the helicopter we heard sounded like it was traveling at a normal cruise speed.

We spoke with our property manager and neighbor later that day. She said that she also heard the same thing as we did, being a helicopter flying VERY low over her house. She actually seemed alarmed at how low it was and said that she was glad that it didn't hit her house.

END.

Submitted by: Samantha Link



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Samantha Link
Aviation Accident Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Date: April 29, 2019
Person Contacted: Honolulu Police Department
NTSB Accident Number: WPR19FA123

Narrative:

The following witness statements were reported to Police Officers from the Honolulu Police Department:

Maika Kaikaka reported that at about 0907 hours, he heard a loud bang while working outside. He then observed a helicopter free fall in the air and fall onto Oneawa Street. He ran toward the scene to help and observed a mangled helicopter in flames. He mentioned that he did not observe the helicopter spin out of the air, but instead it fell straight down after the bang. He described the weather as overcast, light rain, with no wind.

Ikona Kaaapana reported it was headed makai over my house, I heard a loud boom sound and looked out my window. That's when I saw a helicopter with no rotors in distress, falling out of the sky. It was on its side and appeared black in color. Then it fell lower and disappeared from my sight. That's when we saw smoke coming from down the road and we attempted to call 911.

Noah Phillips reported he was in his house when he heard a loud noise "like a cannon." He looked out the window and saw a helicopter falling out of the sky "in a bent shape or pieces were broken off because it wasn't its usual size." He also mentioned that pieces were falling out of the sky after the accident.

Matthew Miller reported that he heard a loud bang and went outside to look. The weather was slightly raining, and he saw a helicopter about 1,000 feet above the ground inverted and about 45 degrees nose down with the rotors not turning at full speed. The helicopter disappeared below the roof line.

William Medeiros reported that he heard two loud bangs and went to look. He saw a red helicopter in the air with sparks coming below the rotor. He saw the helicopter flying from the direction of the ocean to the mountain then made a sudden right bank turn with the nose tilted forward. The helicopter started to fly sideways, and debris was coming out from the helicopter. He further mentioned that he only saw one helicopter in the air at the time.

Gerald Carter reported that he heard a loud sound like a metal trailer being pulled by the truck and the trailer was bouncing around. Then he heard a “crash-like falling glass.” He looked around outside of his house and found a blade from a helicopter in his backyard and damage to a portion of his roof with debris on the ground.

Donna Kahakui reported that she heard a helicopter close by. And then she heard a “Pac” sound (not a boom). She looked up and immediately saw a helicopter with a few pieces of debris flying from the helicopter. One blade was visible, and the other blade appeared to be bent then flew off. She was unsure if there was a third blade. It appeared as if the helicopter was just falling from the sky and had turned from being upright to sideways, then upside down. She did not see the impact, hear an explosion, or see any fire/smoke. She mentioned that it was raining at the time, “a small rain versus a heavy rain,” cloudy.

David Takayesu was in his backyard area when he heard a helicopter overhead. He heard a loud mechanical clank or bump noise. He looked up and saw the helicopter falling. Both blades of the helicopter formed a “V” shape as the helicopter fell. He did not recall see any falling debris. He heard the impact and saw the smoke but did not see the impact.

END.

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