

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

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GRANT AVIATION N9448B *

C208 ACCIDENT * Accident No.: ANC19LA031

BETHEL, ALASKA *

JULY 8, 2019 *

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Interview of: JORDAN NEZBETH

Pilot

Tuesday,
July 9, 2019

APPEARANCES:

NOREEN PRICE, Aviation Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

ERIC SWENSON, Aviation Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

CLINTON HAMANN, Aviation Safety Inspector
Federal Aviation Administration

DAN KNESEK, Vice-President of Operations
Grant Aviation

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I N T E R V I E W

MS. PRICE: Okay, let's get started. My name is Noreen Price, aviation accident investigator with the NTSB in the Anchorage Office. We're here interviewing the pilot of Grant Aviation accident ANC19LA031. It's July 9th, 2019.

Going to go around the room and introduce everybody who's present here. Go ahead, Eric.

MR. SWENSON: Eric Swenson, aviation accident investigator with the NTSB out of Anchorage.

MR. NEZBETH: Jordan Nezbeth, pilot for Grant Aviation and the pilot of 9448-Bravo.

MR. KNESEK: Dan Knesek, vice president of operations, Grant Aviation.

MR. HAMANN: Clinton Hamann, Federal Aviation Administration, aviation safety inspector at Denali CMO.

MR. WILHELM: Mark Wilhelm, Richmond & Quinn. I'm representing Jordan here today for the purpose of this interview.

MS. PRICE: Okay, great.

And, Jordan, you did ask Mark to be here today?

MR. NEZBETH: Yes.

MS. PRICE: Okay, great. Thank you. Could you spell your name for us, Jordan?

MR. NEZBETH: It's J-o-r-d-a-n. Do you want middle name?

MS. PRICE: No.

MR. NEZBETH: Last name is spelled N-e-z-b-e-t-h. That's

1 November-Echo-Zulu-Bravo-Echo-Tango-Hotel.

2 MS. PRICE: Great.

3 MR. SWENSON: What is -- before we go forward --

4 MS. PRICE: Yeah.

5 MR. SWENSON: Clint, can I have your -- how do you spell your
6 last name?

7 MR. HAMANN: H-a-m-a-n-n, Nancy-Nancy at the end.

8 MR. SWENSON: Okay. And just -- we talked about this before
9 we came in the room, but you're here with the FAA wearing a safety
10 hat and not an enforcement hat and --

11 MR. HAMANN: Correct.

12 MR. SWENSON: -- you understand that, and Noreen explained
13 that what's used -- what's said here today cannot be used for
14 enforcement purposes?

15 MR. HAMANN: That's correct.

16 MS. PRICE: Great, okay. And, Jordan, this is a safety
17 investigation, the purpose is to figure out where probable cause
18 is and then perhaps make recommendations to prevent these type of
19 accidents in the future.

20 I can't offer you any type of liability. We don't get
21 involved in legal cases; it's strictly a safety accident
22 investigation. Everything will be recorded today, like we
23 discussed earlier. It will be transcribed and that transcription
24 will be part of the permanent record.

25 Before we get started do you have any questions?

1 MR. NEZBETH: Will we receive a copy of the transcript?

2 MS. PRICE: You will when it's published.

3 MR. NEZBETH: Okay.

4 MS. PRICE: So when the accident is done. The party
5 representative will have a copy of the transcript when it's
6 written.

7 MR. NEZBETH: Okay.

8 INTERVIEW OF JORDAN NEZBETH

9 BY MS. PRICE:

10 Q. Okay. So how long have you worked for Grant Aviation?

11 A. This is my eleventh month.

12 Q. And then who did you work for prior to them?

13 A. It's a company called Air Flight Charters based in Fort
14 Lauderdale, Florida.

15 Q. And about how much total flight time do you have?

16 A. It would be around 2300 hours, maybe a little bit more than
17 that.

18 Q. Okay. And do you know about how much in a Caravan that you
19 have?

20 A. Approximately 900 hours.

21 Q. And what airplanes do you fly for Grant other than the
22 Caravan; any other?

23 A. That's the only aircraft that I fly for Grant.

24 Q. Okay. Okay. So what I'd like you to do is talk about that
25 day, yesterday, the whole day for me. Tell me about -- I don't

1 know anything about the flight. I don't know if it was scheduled,
2 unscheduled, chartered, what time you started. So if you could
3 just start from the beginning of your day, what you loaded, who
4 you loaded, where you went, how many legs, and then we'll end up
5 with the -- and if there were a lot -- were there a lot of legs
6 before the accident?

7 A. I believe so, yeah. It kind of blurs together every day
8 because like I'm like flying a bunch, but --

9 Q. Yeah.

10 A. -- and like every day I fly to the same places, so -- but I
11 can hit you with the --

12 Q. I'll get the exact information from them, but I'm kind of --
13 I'm more interested in like what time you showed up.

14 A. Yep.

15 Q. And then how much you flew beforehand. And I don't need a
16 lot of details about that, but the actual leg that the accident
17 occurred on will be -- well, I'll need as much detail as you can
18 provide for that.

19 A. Yep.

20 Q. How does that sound?

21 A. It sounds good.

22 Q. Okay. Thank you.

23 A. All right. So I started for a 7:30 a.m. show for my duty
24 day. We started as normal. We had a little team meeting in the
25 morning to discuss any issues or any concerns anybody had from any

1 prior flying or anything else that was coming up. We moved
2 forward. I had preflighted my aircraft, which was November-Niner-
3 448-Bravo. After preflighting my aircraft, I believe that I flew
4 to -- I did; I flew to Cape Newenham on a charter, empty on the
5 way out. I picked up three people in Cape Newenham. I brought
6 those three people directly back to Bethel.

7 After the Cape Newenham flight, I'm not -- I might have had a
8 small flight in the middle, I can't remember, but I do recall that
9 I used approximately only about a little bit over 2 hours of
10 flying before my -- the flight that we're going to be discussing
11 here. So it was probably just the Cape Newenham flight first and
12 then I was going straight into this flight.

13 This flight, my routing was to depart Bethel, fly to Kasigluk
14 to drop off a couple passengers in Kasigluk. From Kasigluk I was
15 to go to Tununak. After Tununak I went to Toksook Bay. From
16 Toksook Bay I flew to Newtok, and then from Newtok I flew direct
17 back to Bethel.

18 Q. Okay. And what did you pick up in Newtok? What were you
19 flying from Newtok to Bethel?

20 A. I dropped off people in Newtok --

21 Q. Oh, okay.

22 A. -- and then I had people that I picked up in a couple of the
23 other villages.

24 Q. All right.

25 A. I do not believe that any of the passengers got -- anybody

1 got on in Newtok, but I do know that my total people from Newtok
2 back to Bethel was five passengers plus myself, two of which were
3 children, three of which were women.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. And a few bags, just a couple backpacks.

6 Q. So no other cargo or anything?

7 A. No cargo period.

8 Q. No? No cargo.

9 A. No, just whatever baggage.

10 Q. No mail?

11 A. No, ma'am.

12 Q. Just their bags?

13 A. No back home mail, nothing, just whatever baggage the
14 passengers brought.

15 Q. Could you remember what your takeoff weight was out of
16 Newtok?

17 A. If I recall, it was definitely below 8,000 pounds. I believe
18 it to be around 7800 pounds, was my takeoff weight out of Newtok.

19 Q. And do you remember what your fuel load was out of Newtok?

20 A. I think, if I recall correctly, it was about 500 pounds a
21 side, but it could have been less. It could have been 400 pounds
22 a side, but no less than that.

23 Q. Okay. Was it a scheduled flight? Do you remember the flight
24 number? I haven't seen the manifest.

25 A. I do not remember the flight number, but, yes, it was a

1 scheduled flight.

2 Q. It was scheduled, okay. Thanks. We'll get the manifest from
3 the company.

4 MS. PRICE: Do you remember, Dan, what the --

5 MR. KNESEK: I can pull it up in an email real quick if you
6 wanted the flight number --

7 MS. PRICE: No, that's all right.

8 MR. KNESEK: -- or would you rather me not do that?

9 MS. PRICE: No, that's all right. We'll get it later, yeah.

10 MR. KNESEK: Yeah.

11 MS. PRICE: Don't worry about that.

12 BY MS. PRICE:

13 Q. Okay. And were you on time when you left Newtok or were you
14 behind schedule, ahead of schedule?

15 A. I do not recall.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. I do not recall.

18 MR. KNESEK: We consider on time -- sorry. I don't know if I
19 can interject?

20 MS. PRICE: No -- yeah, yeah. Sure.

21 MR. KNESEK: Basically, we just do it based on the departure
22 time, so we'd have to look at his departure time from Bethel.

23 MS. PRICE: I see.

24 MR. KNESEK: We consider it on time because that flight that
25 -- what we call the Nelson Island flight, pops all around. So it

1 varies on arrival times in the villages --

2 MS. PRICE: Okay.

3 MR. KNESEK: -- because the routing changes even en route.

4 MR. PRICE: All right.

5 MR. KNESEK: So you get calls, so it's really -- on time is
6 when you leave.

7 BY MS. PRICE:

8 Q. So do you have any memory of feeling like you were behind on
9 the schedule?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. I did not spend any extra time at any airport waiting on
13 anybody.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. So I would consider myself to have been on time and
16 comfortable.

17 Q. Good. And how about the environmentalals? What was the
18 weather like that day?

19 A. Winds were calm. There was -- and that would include Bethel
20 to the island, winds were very light at all locations. There was
21 smoke in the air but no cloud cover and very hot, probably 90 -- I
22 think it was 90 or 92 degrees on the ground.

23 Q. And did that affect the performance on any of these flights?

24 A. Well, the temperature affects the performance of the
25 aircraft, but like -- I'm sorry, I don't know what I'm saying --

1 yes.

2 Q. Yeah.

3 A. The temperature affected the performance of the aircraft.

4 Q. Okay. All right. So tell me what happened when you arrived
5 in Bethel. In as much detail as you can regarding other traffic,
6 communications you had with ATC, what runways you were going for
7 and then how the approach and accident worked out.

8 A. Okay. I was coming back from Newtok. I was 10 miles to the
9 west of Bethel Airport, at which point I radioed Bethel Tower on
10 118.7. I informed them of my location, and due to -- I was
11 monitoring the frequency before I called up and I heard lots of
12 traffic in the area. So due to this high volume of traffic that
13 was all going to the Runway 1 Left or Runway 1 Right, I just --
14 when I contacted, I notified them that I'd be willing to accept 1-
15 2, which is a more direct route from the location I was coming.
16 And if I did -- I told them that if it made it easier for them, I
17 would accept 1-2.

18 They informed me at that time that they would give me a
19 runway assignment when I call them at 4 miles. So I continued
20 inbound and was kind of splitting the difference between an
21 approach into Runway 1 and -- yeah, approach into Runway 1 and an
22 approach into Runway 1-2.

23 At 5 miles, they radioed me before I was told to contact them
24 at 4 miles. They radioed me at 5 miles and gave me a runway
25 assignment of Runway 1-2, at which time I accepted the assignment

1 of Runway 1-2, and I turned -- I don't know if I can use this
2 terminology but like a dogleg final. Okay.

3 Q. Uh-huh.

4 A. On a dogleg final towards Runway 1-2, and was continuing on
5 my descent down on a normal descent profile. When I was
6 approximately 3 miles from the threshold of Runway 1-2, Bethel
7 Tower radioed me and asked me to square up my approach.

8 I thought this was a little bit different seeing as how there
9 was nobody in front of me for Runway 1-2. I complied. I turned
10 as to make what would be close to a 90-degree intercept to the
11 final approach. At this time, due to the smoke in the area and me
12 being near the highest terrain around Bethel, I decided that it
13 would be ideal for me to maintain altitude to keep a better visual
14 picture of what was going on rather than descending and making two
15 90-degree turns. Not 90 degrees of bank but 90 degrees of heading
16 change.

17 So I maintained my altitude at approximately 800 to 1,000
18 feet until I re-intercepted the final or just intercepted the
19 final approach course. I then began my descent on final approach.
20 Sorry, I missed one thing before. When they asked me to square
21 up, they did already clear me to land, but, as I said, because
22 this was a little bit different for me; not something I expected,
23 I would say -- not different for me but it's not something I
24 expected at the time to hear, I just reconfirmed that they cleared
25 me to land when I ended up turning back on final. They

1 acknowledged and said, yes, you are clear -- 48-Bravo cleared to
2 land Runway 1-2.

3 So I continued. And now I started my descent again. And I
4 was -- due to me maintaining level to keep that visual picture, I
5 was a little bit higher than the normal, I would say, approach,
6 but nothing higher than something that I would be more than
7 comfortable performing. It was just instead of doing a 500-foot
8 per minute descent, I increased my descent rate to approximately
9 700 feet per minute just to kind of make up that difference.

10 Tower informed me that the wind was variable 3 knots, so
11 there's no preference on a runway. I was not accepting any
12 tailwind or anything like that, so I was more than comfortable
13 with my descent angle. I continued down on my descent path.

14 Upon reaching over the runway, I started my flare and this
15 time I was in landing configuration so I had the propeller full
16 forward and my flaps were at 30 degrees. I began my flare
17 maneuver and I was holding what in my opinion was a longer float
18 over the runway than normal. I continued to float to a point
19 where I was no longer comfortable with touching down on the runway
20 and ensuring a safe stop without having to do anything drastic.

21 So at that point I began the go-around maneuver. I applied
22 full power. I went up from flaps 30 degrees to flaps 20 degrees
23 and I pitched my nose to a climb angle. While doing this I
24 radioed tower to inform them of my decision that I had to do a go-
25 around.

1 Right after that go-around -- like right after I set up for
2 the go-around, because I was about 5 feet over the runway before I
3 added that full power and reduced flaps from 30 degrees to 20
4 degrees, I made a gentle main-wheels-only touchdown on the runway,
5 on Runway 1-2, and then my aircraft became in a positive rate of
6 climb.

7 Right after I called this missed approach -- this is kind of
8 all happening like (makes sound). So right after I called the
9 missed approach and had all this stuff -- like my full power in
10 and my flaps reduced, it is my recollection that tower called out
11 to me, 48-Bravo immediate left turn. And I'm pretty sure that's
12 the wording used, was immediate left turn. And I believe that
13 they said it twice: Immediate left turn; 48-Bravo, immediate left
14 turn.

15 And I knew that there was an Airvan on approach short final
16 or somewhere close to short final for Runway 1 Left, which was at
17 the end of Runway 1-2 perpendicularly. Not perfectly
18 perpendicular but -- and I knew there was, I believed to be
19 Caravan behind him, and then I think it was a 207 approaching
20 Runway 1 Right. I did not know the location of that other
21 aircraft. The only aircraft that I was certain on was the Airvan
22 that was on short final or somewhere near short final for Runway 1
23 Left.

24 With this call of making an immediate left turn, as I was in
25 my go-around procedure facing runway heading of Runway 1-2, still

1 very low to the ground, because this is all happening quick, I was
2 probably, if it were to be just an estimate, about 30 feet above
3 the ground at this time. They -- hearing that, I became concerned
4 for striking another aircraft because I was going over that other
5 runway, so --

6 MR. NEZBETH: Dan, were you going to say something?

7 MR. KNESEK: No.

8 MR. NEZBETH: My apologies. So with that concern, I entered
9 this left turn, which is a maneuver that I would not normally do
10 at such a low altitude, and upon my inputs of this control I was
11 -- so I added the left aileron and I had my hand on the power
12 lever. Really quickly after I added the left aileron, it is my
13 belief that the right wing stalled first with that left aileron
14 adding the extra drag at the airspeed I was at. So my -- as I
15 started the left turn, my aircraft fell to the right, and it was a
16 quick fall because, as I said, I was not too high above the
17 ground.

18 So once that aircraft fell, I cannot say what touched the
19 ground first. I do not know if it was just the right main at this
20 time or if the wing at this time. But now my concern as to -- oh,
21 sorry -- where I touched down was now on 1 Left. And in my
22 opinion, approximately 20, maybe a little bit more than that, feet
23 from where the drop-off is off of the side of 1 Left towards 1
24 Right, because there's runway and then there's a bit of gravel.
25 So approximately 20, maybe a little bit more than that. It's hard

1 to tell. I touched down there and it was -- became aware to me,
2 like I became aware of the fact that it was imminent that I was
3 going into that ditch.

4 So now my goal became -- I cannot make this plane fly at this
5 time, so I slow down. So to accomplish this with one wing, which
6 in my opinion at the time was making more lift than the other
7 wing, as to why I ended up at an angle like this on the ground
8 when trying to turn the opposite way was, okay, dump your flaps --
9 sorry -- flaps to zero. So I reached for the flaps, the flap
10 lever, and I pulled up, but I was moving very quickly so I cannot
11 confirm if I made them all the way to zero or if they stopped
12 higher -- at a different number than zero, like 15 degrees or so.

13 But I reached for the flap lever. I grabbed the lever and I
14 moved it, and then I reached for the power lever and I shoved it
15 back, but as I shoved it back we hit the ground again. Like now
16 we were off into the ditch. And then once I pulled back, I made
17 impact again, and then once I hit, I don't know what happened. I
18 don't know if it's at zero or if it's at 10 percent, 20 percent, I
19 don't know what happened to it, because at that point was when we
20 started spinning.

21 So I hit, spun around, and then we were on the co-pilot side
22 of the airplane. We were laying with that -- the co-pilot side of
23 the airplane was on the ground, and then my side of the aircraft
24 was facing the sky, up. My initial reaction was, okay, this just
25 happened, let's get rid of power to avoid a fire.

1 So I wasn't at this time super concerned with electrical
2 fire. I was -- at first I was like, hey, let's get rid of fuel.
3 So I reached for the fuel selector. I do not recall if I
4 completely turned one or both of them off or -- I just know I
5 touched them. I reached, and then as I reached for them I was
6 dangling like this way so my head was already guided this
7 direction. I saw that the plane was already now on fire and it
8 was at the co-pilot side window, which was kind of pressed on the
9 ground but a little bit elevated, I guess, like a couple of inches
10 so I could see the flames through there, and I could see it
11 through the front side of the co-pilot windshield as well, so co-
12 pilot door and co-pilot windshield were on fire.

13 So now it was, in my opinion, too late to concern myself with
14 shutting any sort of power sources down, so I disconnected my
15 seatbelt and my major concern now was the fact that I had two
16 children on board. Well, my first concern now was that I had two
17 children on board. So I disconnected my seatbelt and -- oh,
18 sorry, I forgot -- the only doors that were available at this time
19 were my door and the cargo door. So these are the two doors on
20 the left side of the aircraft. The other two doors were pressed
21 too tightly into the ground to think about opening. So it was
22 just my door and the cargo door.

23 So due to the fact that there was children in the back of my
24 plane and people were stuck, I chose not to go out of my door. I
25 went to the back of the airplane. I opened the cargo door, which

1 was now facing up, like it was the roof of the plane essentially
2 at this point. So I opened the cargo door. I grabbed the
3 youngest child, who's a young boy, and I pushed him out of the top
4 and was just like telling him to like move when I was pushing him,
5 like go away from the plane. And then I grabbed the -- I helped
6 the young lady out of the door as well, pushed her out the top and
7 then said the same things to her.

8 And then, so now that the children were outside and as safe
9 as can be in this -- at this time, my next concern was the fact
10 that at least two of the women were stuck in their seatbelts. I
11 don't remember clearly if the third was also stuck, but I know for
12 sure two were stuck in their seatbelts. So I went towards the
13 front of the aircraft, because my decision making was that the
14 first was moving from the front backwards.

15 So I went to the front of the plane and I disconnected the
16 first -- the closest passenger to the front. I disconnected her
17 seatbelt and then I disconnected the second closest person's
18 seatbelt and, as I said, I do not recall if the third person got
19 up by themselves or if I disconnected it for them. But I do
20 recall that that third person was able to climb out of the
21 aircraft with very little to no assistance. The other two women
22 were incapable at that time of climbing out of the aircraft.

23 So at first I was behind them while they were trying to get
24 out but they could not climb out, so I jumped out of the cargo
25 door onto what is the side of the aircraft but is now facing

1 upward, and I reached down and I pulled the first woman out by
2 both of her arms until I got her on top of the plane and then like
3 got her to get down off the side of the aircraft that was towards
4 Runway 1 Left and 1-9 Right. And then I did the same for the
5 other woman, I grabbed both of her arms and I pulled her up.

6 And then at this time the aircraft was really on, like on
7 fire, smoking a lot. So since now we were all outside the plane,
8 I just did a quick count, because I knew I had five passengers on
9 board. So I just said 1,2,3,4,5; 1,2,3,4,5. I counted them a
10 couple times, and then I got everybody with me to move away from
11 the airplane towards Runway 1 Left.

12 And then after started -- we got away from Runway 1 Left,
13 there were these three gentlemen that came in a truck and they had
14 like camo pants on. I do not recall what their jobs were or who
15 they worked for, but they came, and they came running up to the
16 plane with fire extinguishers, but they could not see us because
17 we were in pretty long grass. So I made myself known to them so
18 that they would not think that we were stuck in the plane and try
19 to jump into a burning plane and end up getting themselves
20 injured.

21 And once they saw us there, they came over to us and then
22 that was pretty much it. Just got -- a couple, like, firetrucks
23 showed up. A couple mechanics showed up, not from my company,
24 from another company. And then they were asking us at first to
25 sit on the side of the runway or just wait there, but one of the

1 women was yelling that she was pregnant when she was inside the
2 plane so I asked if they would be able to take the pregnant woman
3 and the young children to the hospital while the rest of us waited
4 if we had to. So they did that. And then they put us in a truck
5 and then brought us over to some more firefighters that were on
6 the other side of the runway after the other firefighters got to
7 our plane.

8 MS. PRICE: That's an amazing story. What an amazing thing
9 you had to go through. I'm so sorry about that. Your memory is
10 amazing, Jordan. Your details are awesome. We're going to take a
11 break just for a minute, okay?

12 MR. NEZBETH: All right, cool.

13 (Off the record.)

14 (On the record.)

15 BY MS. PRICE:

16 Q. Okay. Let's continue on. Thank you, Jordan.

17 When you say you applied takeoff power during your go-around,
18 what power setting is that? Or is it maximum or takeoff power
19 or --

20 A. No, this is red line. It's the first red line, so --

21 Q. It is red line? Okay.

22 A. Yeah. It's to the red line, but you can't hit the gate.
23 Like you can't go -- you can't -- sorry; I don't know how to
24 explain it. So there's a red line on the indicator but there's
25 no, like, stop. Like I could overpower the aircraft if I were --

1 Q. Right.

2 A. -- to slap it forward.

3 Q. That's what I'm asking is, did you do that or was it --

4 A. No. I went to red.

5 Q. Red.

6 A. Like I went to the appropriate power setting.

7 Q. Do you know what that --

8 A. I do. I'm just -- I might be able to -- I think it's 1890.

9 Q. I wasn't sure if it was 2,000 or what you guys have on
10 your --

11 A. No, I'm just -- sorry, I'm just -- I've got a lot on my mind.

12 Q. That's okay.

13 A. But I do know. Just give me like a second and it will come
14 back to me.

15 Q. Well, first red line. That's okay. We can look that up.
16 You don't need to --

17 A. Yeah, I know, but I know this. I'm sorry.

18 Q. If you want to, by all means you go, go --

19 A. I'm a believer as a check airman, like give the color too.

20 Q. Yeah.

21 A. They put a color there for a reason.

22 Q. I know you're not pushing to a number; you're pushing to the
23 line. So that's fine.

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Give me a color to aim for.

25 MR. NEZBETH: Yeah. 1093, I believe.

1 BY MS. PRICE:

2 Q. Don't -- okay.

3 A. Sorry. Sorry.

4 Q. Let's get back --

5 A. Yeah, my bad.

6 Q. No, no, no, no, I get it.

7 A. I (indiscernible).

8 Q. But don't -- we'll just pass by that.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. It's not, it's not that --

11 A. Red line. First red, first red line.

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Two in the morning it'll come to you.

13 BY MS. PRICE:

14 Q. Not that important. How often do you land on Runway 1-2?

15 A. Quite often.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. I mean, pretty much every time that I'm coming in for -- from

18 out west and there is any aircraft that is going to be on final or

19 something like that for runway, either 1-9 Right or 1 Left, I

20 usually take 1-2. Just expedites things.

21 Q. Okay. And expedite because you --

22 A. Oh, just keep my day moving, like no rush from anybody else,

23 just --

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. -- I like to keep my day going.

1 Q. Does the company try and keep you on time or bother pilots
2 about --

3 A. No. Of course, they don't want us, like if I'm just hanging
4 out in the breakroom eating my third lunch of the day, someone
5 might have a question for me. But there's never -- never been any
6 pressure from the company on getting out before doing anything I
7 need to do or rushing me to do something where I'm not ready to or
8 anything like that. It's just, of course, they have -- we'd like
9 you to be on time but --

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. -- no extra pressure.

12 Q. All right. And is there some -- how do you judge where your
13 go/no-go point is on that runway to make the decision to continue
14 or go around like you did? Is there something you're looking at
15 or --

16 A. So for me, usually for that runway, I like to flare at the
17 latest it would be about no more than like, I guess, it would be a
18 third down the runway. There's a spot on the runway that just
19 kind of looks different, so I just kind of look for it like that,
20 and I want to flare before that and touch down. But on this day,
21 I was continuing floating past that.

22 Q. Okay. And what is the minimum runway length that you're
23 allowed to land the Caravan in Grant Aviation; do you know? You
24 may not know.

25 A. That they allow us to?

1 Q. Yeah.

2 A. No, I don't. I know that the smallest runways we go to would
3 be the airport that I just came out of, which was in Newtok.

4 Q. How big is Newtok? Do you know off the --

5 A. I believe it's approximately 2400 feet, if I remember
6 correctly. So it would be Runway 1-2 in Bethel, Newtok, and
7 (indiscernible).

8 Q. Do you know how long Runway 1-2 is at Bethel?

9 A. If my memory's serving me correctly right now, it's about
10 2,000 feet or 1800 feet.

11 Q. Okay. Is that considered a short field for the company; do
12 you know?

13 A. Yeah, yeah. So like, for example, when I first came up
14 there, there was like, oh, we're going to go with somebody to
15 check out the shorter runways first before. It's not just go dive
16 in and go to the short runways.

17 Q. Okay. So do all pilots use that short runway, do you
18 believe, if you're coming from the west --

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. -- to expedite?

21 A. All -- yeah, I can't speak for any other company, but for
22 Grant pilots.

23 Q. For Grant pilots.

24 A. For Grant pilots, I would say all pilots that are not on
25 pilot restrictions use that runway.

1 Q. Okay. If there's no traffic at the airport are you still
2 using that runway? I'm just curious. Trying to get the --

3 A. It depends where the winds are coming from at that point. If
4 the winds are -- like if, let's say, the winds are going to give
5 me a 30-knot crosswind. Not 30 knot, sorry, a 30 degree off the
6 runway crosswind for using the big runway but it's going to be
7 almost down the pike for using 1-2 and there's no traffic in the
8 area, guaranteed I'll use 1-2.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. So at that point I just do it off of favored winds.

11 Q. And how often when you come back into Bethel, how busy is
12 Bethel? I've never operated out of Bethel so I don't know. Give
13 me an idea if you could just describe the environment at Bethel
14 Airport.

15 A. So it goes in waves, I would say. You could come back and be
16 the only plane anywhere near Bethel and then you can come back
17 after your next flight and be one of six. So it really goes in
18 waves, I would say, so it's tough to --

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. It's not constantly busy; it's just up and down throughout
21 the day.

22 Q. And how do you feel the tower operators do with the traffic
23 load at Bethel?

24 A. I would, I would just be like --

25 Q. How would you characterize them? Are they doing a great job,

1 a good job, an average job, or there are problems at Bethel
2 Airport with tower control?

3 A. In my experience with them personally?

4 Q. Yeah, in your experience, yeah.

5 A. Personally it's been fine.

6 Q. Great. Okay.

7 A. But I -- yeah.

8 Q. In this particular accident there was an airplane -- three
9 airplanes inbound, right, to the parallel runways?

10 A. Yes, I believe so. I know that --

11 Q. Did you see the Airvan that was on Runway 1 Left?

12 A. I saw the Airvan when I was setting up for the runway, but
13 when I was getting towards short final I was strictly focused on
14 my task at hand and I was no longer looking for the traffic.

15 Q. Okay. And then you described the elevation in the area. I
16 think I have -- maybe it's beyond this. You were concerned. You
17 stayed high because you --

18 A. It wasn't like a concern. It was just more me taking extra
19 precaution with the reduced visibility.

20 Q. Okay, so --

21 A. So Runway 1-2, it's going to be -- so we're shooting off on
22 Runway 1-2 here. It's going to be just on -- outside of here.
23 There's -- I can't see it on here, but there's a windmill.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. And like a cell phone tower, I believe.

1 Q. So just for the recording --

2 A. Is it further?

3 MR. KNESEK: Here.

4 MR. NEZBETH: Okay, right here.

5 MS. PRICE: -- we're looking at a picture, an overhead
6 satellite picture of Bethel Airport right now.

7 MR. NEZBETH: Yeah. So, yeah, so it's off there, so it would
8 be up here.

9 MR. KNESEK: Yeah, they're right there.

10 MS. PRICE: Okay.

11 MR. KNESEK: All this stuff right here is towers. There's
12 some towers and then the ball, the radar ball's up there.

13 MS. PRICE: Okay.

14 BY MS. PRICE:

15 Q. And you said the air traffic control asked you to do some 90
16 degree --

17 A. Square up my --

18 Q. Square off your --

19 A. -- approach.

20 Q. Have they done that before? Have you ever heard that before?

21 A. Yeah, I've heard that before, for sure, but under the
22 circumstance that there was an aircraft ahead of me that they were
23 trying to give space to.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. I've never heard that with me being the only aircraft on

1 approach to that runway.

2 MS. PRICE: Okay. Those were all the questions I have right
3 now. I'll pass it around, see if anyone else has anything, and
4 then I'll have a couple of follow-ups at the end.

5 Eric, do you have any?

6 BY MR. SWENSON:

7 Q. You might already know, are you pretty much based in Bethel
8 for --

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. -- the last 11 months or so?

11 A. I have flown a little bit elsewhere but for the majority it's
12 been Bethel.

13 Q. And do you -- I don't know if I missed this, but do you
14 remember what your approach speed was?

15 A. My approach speed was 90 knots.

16 MS. SWENSON: That's all I have. Nothing further.

17 MS. PRICE: All right. Dan, do you --

18 MR. KNESEK: No, I don't have anything right this moment.

19 MS. PRICE: Clint, do you have anything -- any questions for
20 Jordan?

21 MR. HAMANN: Not at this moment. You guys have covered the
22 questions I was wondering about.

23 MS. PRICE: Okay.

24 BY MS. PRICE:

25 Q. So talking about your schedule, how many days had you been at

1 Bethel prior to the accident?

2 A. I arrived at Bethel the night of -- whatever the last day of
3 the month was last month, 31st or the 30th -- 30th I believe it
4 was.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. I arrived there the night of the 30th and I've been there
7 until this afternoon I left.

8 Q. Okay. And do you fly every day?

9 A. No. I was not flying on July 4th and I did not fly -- sorry
10 -- no, I did fly the day before yesterday, but like only one
11 flight. But other than that, yes, I flew every day.

12 Q. So your crew day that day started at 7:30; is that right?

13 A. Yes, yes.

14 Q. I just want to confirm your --

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. And how about the evening before, when did you finish up with
17 the flights the day before? Can you remember that?

18 A. I do not. I do not recall. I would -- if I -- no, I do not
19 recall. It was probably around 7:30 p.m., but it could have been
20 earlier that day.

21 Q. Okay. And then where do you go at night? Do you have -- is
22 there company housing, apartments --

23 A. Yeah, we have company housing.

24 Q. -- a house?

25 A. Um-hum.

1 Q. Do you have your own room?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Is it a quiet environment at the house?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Did you have a good night's rest before your flight?

6 A. Absolutely.

7 Q. About how many hours do you think you got?

8 A. I would say 8½ -- 8 hours, 8½.

9 Q. That's pretty good.

10 A. Yeah.

11 MR. KNESEK: Yeah.

12 MS. PRICE: Right.

13 MR. NEZBETH: I was sleeping.

14 MR. KNESEK: I need to go back to (indiscernible).

15 MS. PRICE: I want to go to Bethel to sleep.

16 MR. NEZBETH: Yeah. I had about 8 hours.

17 BY MS. PRICE:

18 Q. Is there air conditioning in the --

19 A. No, there's not. I do have a personal fan that sits right

20 beside my face though.

21 Q. Okay. Do you have any health issues that might have affected

22 performance that day?

23 A. I do not.

24 Q. Okay. Did you give the passengers an emergency brief when

25 you picked them up at each stop? It sounds like you picked up

1 passengers along the way, right, at the various --

2 A. Every stop I did a passenger --

3 Q. So do you do a complete brief at every stop you pick up?

4 A. Every stop, yes.

5 Q. And during that brief did you discuss seatbelt use?

6 A. I discussed seatbelt use. I discussed emergency exits. I
7 discussed wall exits, I guess, all emergency exits. I discussed
8 no smoking. I discussed where the fire extinguisher location was.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. I went over the full passenger briefing every stop because,
11 other than Newtok, I picked up somebody at every place.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. But I -- I may have picked somebody up in Newtok, but I still
14 just do it because it's easier to do it every single time versus
15 guess if somebody new got on my plane and whatever's going on here
16 or whatever, so I do it at every stop.

17 Q. Okay. And the child -- there was one child; is that right?

18 A. There was two children.

19 Q. How old? What ages around?

20 A. I can't say for sure.

21 Q. Yeah.

22 A. But I would guess by looking at the young boy, he was about
23 6, 7 years old, and I'd guess by looking at the young girl that
24 she was approximately 12.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. But I --

2 Q. And they were strapped in seats, right? They were
3 (indiscernible) --

4 A. Yes. Everybody was --

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. -- everybody was wearing their seatbelts, thankfully, because
7 I think that it would have ended potentially differently for
8 people if they were not wearing seatbelts.

9 Q. Okay. And the three women that did not -- there were three
10 women that were sitting in their seats with -- they did not undo
11 their own seatbelts, correct? Is that right?

12 A. I can confirm two.

13 Q. Two. Okay.

14 A. The third I'm --

15 Q. Not sure. All right.

16 A. -- not -- I cannot specifically remember.

17 Q. Why -- did you see them attempting to pull their seatbelts?

18 A. Yes. They were reaching for their buckle but their bodies
19 were hanging and -- onto the seatbelts. So when them hanging onto
20 the seatbelts, (a) it was pretty difficult for them to reach for
21 the buckle, and then (b) it required a pretty good amount of force
22 just because of that outward pressure that was being pulled on it.
23 Nothing excessive, but just like it was -- they were there; they
24 were hitting it, but they just were yelling that they couldn't get
25 it. And then I went and just pushed it for them.

1 Q. Okay. What if you were incapacitated, do you think they
2 would have eventually? I mean, what's your feelings on that in
3 particular because that's kind of important. You know, if you
4 didn't rescue these people, I mean, it could have been a really
5 bad day. So I'm so glad you did, but --

6 A. Yes, I do think that they would have been.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. Specifically because of something that one of the ladies said
9 to me afterward. So they were in the right locations, they were
10 looking for the right spot, but the lady said to me that -- and
11 this was the lady that got out -- was able to get out of the
12 aircraft herself. But she had said to me that keeping like calm
13 -- like saying calm down, like it's okay, we're going to get out,
14 was the one thing that got everybody to start cooperating, because
15 at first they were just yelling and I think they were in a panic
16 mode. And I think in that panic mode, once they touched that red
17 button and it didn't just slip, they freaked out versus trying
18 again.

19 Q. Yeah.

20 A. But I think that if they were -- if I allowed more time to
21 pass, I think that in that scenario that they would have, whether
22 it was out of fear or just calming themselves, been able to push
23 the buckle because it was not difficult and they were in the right
24 location with their hands.

25 Q. Okay. And did you smell any fuel or see any fuel spillage at

1 the accident site?

2 A. Not that I recall did I smell or see fuel.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. I just assumed because of the fire.

5 Q. You were at the scene as the fire started. Do you know where
6 it started from? Could you tell from standing there?

7 A. It just appeared to be when I was sitting in front, the co-
8 pilot side front. Front co-pilot side is where I would say the
9 fire started.

10 Q. Okay. Do you have anything else that you want to talk about
11 regarding the accident?

12 A. I do not.

13 Q. Okay. How do you like flying for Grant?

14 A. I love it.

15 Q. Do you -- how do you feel about their safety culture?

16 A. I think that it's good.

17 Q. What do you think could have prevented the accident itself?

18 A. I think that that would -- I don't really know at this time.
19 I think that I would have to take more time to look at the whole
20 picture and possibly listen -- listening to the ATC recording
21 would help. But other than that, I think that it was a normal
22 situation that ended up being abnormal, so I don't really have an
23 opinion as of that right now.

24 MS. PRICE: Okay. Thank you very much.

25 Eric, do you have anything?

1 MR. SWENSON: Nothing further at this time. Thanks.

2 MS. PRICE: No? Dan? Clint?

3 MR. HAMANN: At some point I'll need your certificate
4 (indiscernible).

5 MR. NEZBETH: It's in the fire.

6 MR. KNESEK: We have copies.

7 MR. HAMANN: Also logbook.

8 MR. KNESEK: Yeah. Okay. Logbook that's --

9 MR. HAMANN: Yeah.

10 MR. NEZBETH: Okay. Half is a hard copy in Florida; the
11 other half is the internet copy, like I can print.

12 MR. HAMANN: Okay.

13 BY MS. PRICE:

14 Q. So one of the things we'll need for you is to recreate who
15 was sitting where in the plane, just to just -- is that something
16 you can do, do you know? Not right now.

17 A. Yes. I think so.

18 Q. But into the future, that's just --

19 A. I couldn't do it by specific name. I could just do, I think,
20 just location.

21 Q. Yeah, you wouldn't know. Okay.

22 A. It would be like --

23 Q. Maybe just where the children were or the women or are they
24 about the same size. Because we have to do a weight and balance,
25 I just want to figure out who was where --

1 A. Okay.

2 Q. -- in the plane. So sometime in the future maybe you can
3 work on that for us --

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. -- and keep it in mind.

6 A. I'll just think about it just with --

7 Q. Yeah.

8 A. I'm sure I'll --

9 MS. PRICE: Okay. Hey, thank you very much. Did you --

10 MR. SWENSON: No.

11 MS. PRICE: Oh. Clint, did you have something else?

12 MR. HAMANN: No. I just thought (indiscernible).

13 MR. SWENSON: I was just going to say, when you do your
14 seating chart give it -- you could give it to Dan.

15 MS. PRICE: Right.

16 MS. SWENSON: Dan will then pass it on to Noreen.

17 MR. NEZBETH: Okay.

18 MS. PRICE: Again, thank you so much. You really are a great
19 help. It sounds like you were quite the hero in rescuing those
20 people from the plane so your details were amazing. If anything
21 else comes up and you feel like sharing in regard to the accident
22 or any of the circumstances surrounding that, please give us a
23 call. Dan will know how to get in touch with me.

24 MR. NEZBETH: Okay.

25 MS. PRICE: Okay. Any other comments or questions?

1 MR. NEZBETH: No.
2 MS. PRICE: Okay, great. This concludes the interview.
3 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: GRANT AVIATION N9448B
 C208 ACCIDENT
 BETHEL, ALASKA
 JULY 8, 2019
 Interview of Jordan Nezbeth

ACCIDENT NO.: ANC19LA031

PLACE:

DATE: July 9, 2019

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed
to the best of my skill and ability.


Cheryl Farner-Donovan
Transcriber