



Memo

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**Date: 10/30/2020
Persons Contacted: Thomas Palmer, FAA Inspector
NTSB Accident Number: ANC20CA082**

Memorandum of communications with Federal Aviation Administration Inspector Thomas Palmer.

Inspector Palmer interviewed the pilot and instructor pilot who were involved with the accident of N1526A PA20 that occurred at Talkeetna Airport on August 18, 2020. He also discussed the operation and examination of the tailwheel with the airplane owner. These are summaries of the communications provided to the NTSB via email.

Pilot/ Gary Ken Briden Jr. - The FAA determined that Mr. Briden was the pilot-in-command of the flight based on his currency and qualifications, (tailwheel endorsement, ASEL current, flight instructor.) Ken (Gary) Briden stated that he wanted to fly as an instructor in PA-20s at Don Lee's but did not have experience in them. Don Lee told him that he would pay for the airplane and fuel and Ken would have to pay for the flight instructor. Ken texted Robin Spaulding (CFI) and requested flight instruction and he paid her \$60 for a flight on August 11. Ken said that the first flight on the 11th went well. He performed about 8 stop and goes, 3-point landings and wheel landings from the right seat. He did experience some tail wheel shimmy during that flight.

Ken Briden reported that on the day of the accident, the weather was good, no wind and runway 1 was in use at Talkeetna Airport. He performed several wheel landings and two or three 3-point landings. On the first 3-point landing, the tail wheel shimmied, but it wasn't too noticeable. On the final landing, the airplane bounced slightly and upon touchdown the tailwheel had a severe shimmy as if the tail wheel was spinning. The nose veered to the right and it quickly entered a ground loop which he could not recover from. The airplane came to rest on the left wing and horizontal stabilizer.

Owner Don Lee/airplane owner - Don Lee, the owner, is incredibly experienced in tailwheel operations and stated he did not believe a free castoring tailwheel would have imparted any unusual forces onto the aircraft. He stated that many aircraft with a free castoring/swiveling tailwheel landed successfully all the time. The FAA and the owner determined that the tailwheel was not a contributing factor to the ground loop. The tailwheel was checked by maintenance after the accident and found to be functioning correctly.