



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

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Date: March 30, 2021
Persons Contacted: Nathan McCabe
NTSB Accident Number: ANC20FA017, Yute Commuter Services, PA-32

Narrative: Mr. McCabe was the company assistant business manager at Yute Commuter Services at the time of the accident that occurred on February 6, 2020. He was interviewed by telephone and his counsel, Michael Branson, was present with him. FAA inspector Hugh Youngers also attended via telephone. Mr. McCabe was notified that the purpose of the interview was to obtain information about the safety investigation and that a summary of the interview may be published in the public docket. This is a summary Mr. McCabe's statements.

Mr. McCabe had worked at Yute Commuter Services for 1 year and 4 months. He had no aviation experience, except that which he gained at the company. He left the company in June of 2020. He worked for a Mr. Keith Henthorn, the business manager. When asked about financial problems at the company at the time of the accident, he stated that there was more money going out than coming in. He said that there was a constant push to keep the airplanes flying, because they did not make money if the airplanes were not flying. Mr. Wade Renfro, the company general manager/owner/president, was often talking about how they have to "fly, fly, fly." Mr. McCabe stated that he knew of pilots complaining about the push to fly when airplanes were not airworthy. Pilots were returning to base after takeoff due to unfixed mechanical issues. One of the senior pilots, Earnie, would fly in anything, because he was experienced. Other pilots looked up to him.

When asked about how often management personnel were at the base, he stated that it was random and hit and miss for Mr. Renfro, Mr. Henthorn had recently started doing 2 weeks on and 2 weeks off, and the director of operation, Tony Spangler, also traveled to and from Bethel on a scheduled basis. Mr. McCabe stated that the company was very "lax" when no management was around, which was often.

On the day of the accident, Mr. McCabe was working at the company base in Bethel. There were no management personnel present. Once the duty personnel in dispatch were unable to reach the

accident pilot on the radio, Mr. McCabe went to the dispatch office and they proceeded with the overdue/missing airplane procedures from the general operating manual. He kept notes on a yellow notebook page. He recalled that the weather after the accident was very low, but occasionally cleared a bit. He also recalled that one pilot from Renfro's, Jett, came into dispatch and looked at the METAR report that was written at the time the accident flight was dispatched, and he said that it never should have gone. He also tore up a risk assessment that he filled out. Mr. McCabe did not hear anyone else talk of or look at the company risk assessment book where files were kept. They were focused on find the missing airplane. A few pilots and airplanes from Renfro's went out in search of the airplane. At that time, the weather was above the legal limits. He did not recall any conversations with management personnel because they were not present.

In the days after the accident, Mr. McCabe recalled that a red notebook was found by Tony Spangler and it was given to Mr. Renfro. His understanding is that it belonged to the NTSB investigator. He did not know what happened to it.

He also recalled that Mr. Earnie Turrentine, the director of training, spent time working on the accident pilot's training record before the NTSB arrived.

The end.