



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Noreen Price
Aviation Accident Investigator
Alaska Regional Office

Date: February 25, 2020

Persons Contacted: Robert Seladis "Bobby", mechanic

NTSB Accident Number: ANC20FA024, N65070 Cessna 305A

Narrative: Mr. Seladis was a contracted airframe and powerplant mechanic who worked for Honolulu Soaring company. Mr. Seladis was the sole mechanic who worked on the accident airplane at Dillingham Airfield, Mokuleia, Hawaii, for the previous 1.8 years. He was interviewed in person at the company office by Noreen Price, the NTSB investigator-in-charge. Mr. Seladis was provided insight into the NTSB investigative process and was told that a summary of the conversation would be available to the public in the investigation docket. This is a summary of Mr. Seladis' statements.

Mr. Seladis provided his current address as [REDACTED], Honolulu HI 96819, and his current phone number 808-[REDACTED]. He stated that he does not have answering message service but can text. His FAA mechanic certificate number is [REDACTED] issued on July 27, 2015. He presented his Inspection Authorization certificate (FAA Form 8310-5) that expired on March 31, 2019. He was told that the NTSB was looking for him, but he did not know that. When asked where the logbooks for the accident airplane have been, he stated that they were where they were normally kept; in the "cave" at the hangar. Mr. Seladis had the logbooks with him during the interview.

Mr. Seladis was from Kenai, Alaska, and started his career as a mechanic at Kenai Air in the 1970s. He obtained his skills with on the job learning and had no formal training. He earned his mechanic license in 1980. While in Alaska, he worked for various FAR 135, 121 and part 91 operators. He moved to Hawaii and worked as the director of maintenance (DOM) for Pacific Air Express, a part 121 operator, for 6 years. Then he worked for Trans Air as the DOM/mechanic. He worked for Beech Aerospace in Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, as well. Hawaii Pacific Air part 121 carrier for 2 years. Then he worked for Commercial Flyer (part135/91 flight school and inter-island passenger operation) as the DOM/mechanic, followed by Alpine Air for 6 years as DOM/mechanic on Beech 1900s until they lost the inter-island mail contract for Hawaii. He then began working for Pacific Skydiving Center as a contract mechanic at Dillingham

Airfield for about 6-7 years. He also worked for Oahu Parachute Center (OPC), Skydive Hawaii and Honolulu Soaring sometimes for contract work. He stated that none of the companies could afford a full time mechanic position, so he fulfilled their "as needed" contract work. Mr. Seladis began working for Honolulu Soaring in April 2018 as a contract mechanic. He replaced Merrill Clausen, who was too busy with a pilot job to perform maintenance anymore. He maintains the two L19 airplanes, a glider and also performs minor work for the other operators at the airfield. He stated that he did not perform any major maintenance; mostly annual and 100 hour inspections.

Mr. Seladis was asked if the FAA has ever taken enforcement action against him. In response, he stated that they did when he worked for Commercial Flyer about 2004. His license was revoked for life and he did not have the money to fight it at that time, so he began working as a mechanic helper. Sometime after that, a Mr. Howard Martin, an attorney from the FAA, called him and said that he reviewed the case and "something was not right" and the FAA would allow Mr. Seladis to regain his certificate privileges if he was reexamined. Mr. Seladis was reexamined and regained his privileges soon thereafter.

Mr. Seladis described his duties as a contract mechanic for Honolulu Soaring as a part time job on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays and as needed. He had no employment outside of the Dillingham Airfield at the time of the accident. Generally, he would look over the airplanes at the beginning of each day and perform all required inspections. He helped build up the company's other L19, that was not in service yet, and maintained their gliders. He was aware that 100 hour inspections were not required, but that was how the accident airplane was always maintained. He recalled that the last inspection on the airplane was in September 2019.

Mr. Seladis was asked to describe the 100 hour inspection process. He stated that he "opened up all inspection panels, inspects all the flight control cables, conducts magneto timing, replaces all spark plugs, and pulls the oil screen." He stated that the previous mechanic always cleaned and replaced the spark plugs, but Mr. Seladis didn't believe that was best, so he always replaced the engine spark plugs. He noted no contamination on the oil screen. When asked about how he specifically inspected the flight controls for the last inspection, he stated that he "opened up the airplane," (all the access panels), "externally: inspected the wings, fuselage, pulled the seats out, opened up access panels on the floor, cleaned, inspected and lubricated as necessary." He stated that everything was airworthy at that time.

He stated that there was no logbook or file system for documenting gripes or corrective action. It was all verbal. Only the inspections and large component changes were in the logbooks.

He was asked if a pilot had ever complained about binding flight controls. Mr. Seladis explained that typically, if a pilot had an issue, Mr. Seladis would say "let's go take it to Alan and see what he thinks." Alan flew the airplane often and knew it very well. He said that, sometime in the last year, there might have been a flight control binding incident, but Alan took the airplane flying after that pilot reported it and could not duplicate the binding. Mr. Seladis stated that he did not address the issue because it could not be duplicated.

The accident airplane flies about 13 tow flights a day. There were no known mechanical issues with the airplane. Alan, the primary company L19 pilot, told Mr. Seladis that the airplane engine had been running “sweet” lately and that the airplane flies (tracks) very straight.

Mr. Seladis has participated in many accident investigations because he has been in the industry for a while. When asked why he wasn’t working for a FAR part 121 operator, with better pay and benefits, he stated that they were very “clickish” in Hawaii and he did not get along with mechanics in those companies.

He knew the accident pilots very well. They were very well seasoned pilots. He could not figure out why the airplane would have turned right at mid field if the engine failed. There was plenty of room to land on the runway. He said that it didn’t make sense, but anybody can make a mistake. He said, “I tell people, mostly pilots, ‘the minute you get complacent, it’s going to bite you in the a**.’”

The end.

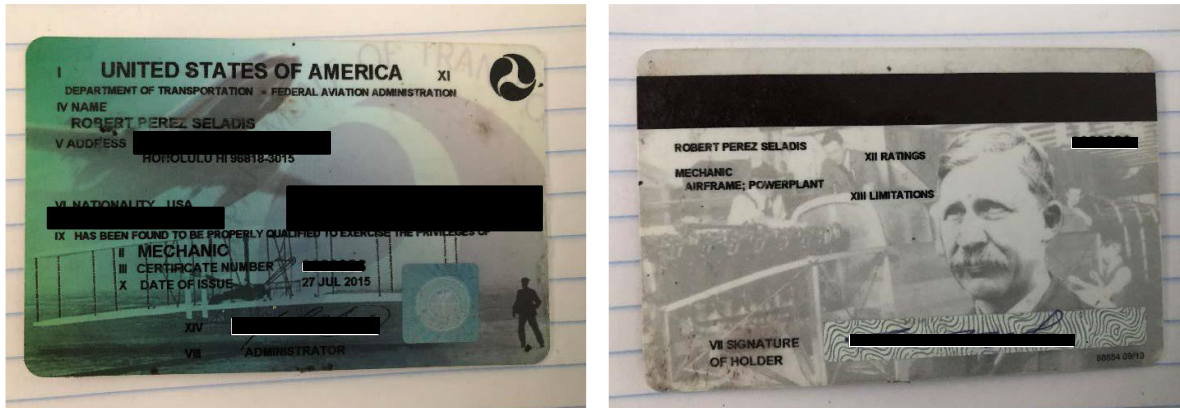


Figure 1. Robert Seladis FAA mechanic certificate (front and back)

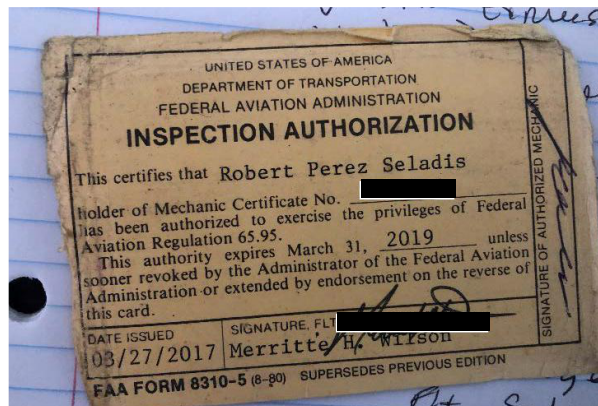


Figure 2. Inspection Authorization certificate presented by Mr. Seladis