

From: [Palmer, Thomas S \(FAA\)](#)
To: [Ward Mark](#)
Cc: [Bockelman, Anthony \(FAA\)](#); [Mrzena, Matthew \(FAA\)](#); [Gromada, Kristian P \(FAA\)](#)
Subject: N3432W, Bryan Schwartz Nunak Air taxi unsatisfactory checkride info
Date: Thursday, October 20, 2022 10:26:40 AM
Attachments: [20221018_2NUC_Schwartz checkride Palmer inspector statement signed.pdf](#)

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Hi Mark,

We confirmed we're cleared to release the info related to the unsatisfactory checkride for Bryan Schwartz, N3432W, Nunak Air Taxi LLC (cert # [REDACTED]).

Attached is my inspector statement that details the unsatisfactory performance I observed on 10/13/2022 during the Part 135 evaluation.

In light of the accident, in addition to my attached statement, Bryan didn't appear to use his center moving map in a way that would enhance his situational awareness of terrain. I observed him keeping his large panel mounted center map on a large scale (zoomed out) which didn't seem to add to his understanding of what was immediately around him. He appeared to focus primarily on his yoke mounted portable GPS, which had a substantially smaller screen. Although all in the NTSB lane, if it's technically possible, it'd be interesting to learn how his GPS systems were set (range scale, and track up or north up) at the time of impact.

Also noted, his magnetic compass was the vertical card type, and tended to "stick" on heading 230, and stay there while turning upwards of 60 degrees of heading change. It would eventually correct itself but presented erroneous heading information until then. He adjusted his directional gyro a couple times during flight using this magnetic compass information while it was "stuck" on an erroneous heading. I debriefed him postflight about this compass observation I had.

I'm also curious about why he was coming back to Birchwood. If he had an engine problem and landed in Yakutat on 10/15/2022, why was he flight planned and flying from Yakutat all the way back to Birchwood? I'm wondering if he was bringing the plane all the way back to Birchwood to get an engine repair done? Mike McCreary is the owner of 70 North ([REDACTED]) and is based at Birchwood. Mike has recently contracted Bryan to do some flying jobs on the North Slope and could probably provide insights into Bryan's performance and recent maintenance. I know Bryan recently had the exhaust system replaced due to a hole that caused smoke to enter the cockpit, which was the main cause of Bryan failing the evaluation with Inspector Matt Mrzena on 10/7/2022.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Tom

Thomas Palmer

FAA, Flight Standards Service

Aviation Safety Inspector-Operations

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

INSPECTOR STATEMENT	
14 CFR Part 135.293 a/b, 135.299 Unsatisfactory Evaluation	NAME: [REDACTED] ATP Certificate # [REDACTED]
Inspector Name: Thomas S. Palmer	Work Address: [REDACTED] Wasilla, AK 99654
Work Phone: [REDACTED]	
Signature:	Date: 10/18/2022

On Thursday 10/13/2022 this inspector, with Inspector Kristian Gromada observing, conducted a 14 CFR Part 135.293 a/b, and 135.299 evaluation of Mr. Bryan A. Schwartz, of Nunak Air Taxi LLC ([REDACTED]) using PA-32-260 N3432W. The flight was conducted from Birchwood (PABV), to a practice area near Big Lake for airwork, the Big Lake (PAGQ) VOR Rwy 7 approach, and then to Wasilla (PAWS) for traffic patterns. The evaluation flight concluded at the Birchwood airport.

The overall result of the evaluation was unsatisfactory for preflight inspection, inflight powerplant failure, system malfunctions, emergency landing, instrument approach, short field landing, and judgment.

The applicant received an email from this inspector two days prior to the checkride outlining all required documents, and the basic flow of events. During the 1 hour at 10 minute oral portion of the evaluation the applicant struggled to recall, but eventually answered basic VFR airspace/weather regulation questions. He misread the takeoff and landing graphs, and was unsure how to properly handle HAZMAT items/paperwork. He was slow to recite multiple emergency procedures in the proper order and required prompting to refer to the appropriate checklist. He was unable to immediately recite the spin recovery steps for this aircraft.

The applicant was briefed to operate this Part 91 evaluation flight as if it was an actual Part 135 revenue flight. After the applicant completed his aircraft preflight inspection he stated the aircraft was ready for flight and told the inspectors to board the aircraft while it still had visible frost on approximately 2/3 of each wing and the stabilator. The applicant stated he made a mistake in removing the wing covers too early in the morning, which allowed the frost to form while he kept the plane parked in the shade. The applicant, an experienced Alaska based pilot, struggled significantly to solve the frost removal problem. He attempted to use a towel, then a broom, then an ice scraper. The inspectors suggested, and helped him move the plane into the morning sun to accelerate the frost removal process. During the oral exam the applicant correctly answered questions about OpSpec A041 Pre Takeoff Contamination Check. The applicant did not demonstrate application of that OpSpec and exhibited poor judgment when he stated the aircraft was ready for flight with visible frost still on the aircraft.

Once the frost was cleaned off, the applicant then boarded the aircraft and sat in the left seat, and stated again the aircraft was ready for flight and directed the Inspectors to board. Meanwhile, he had used the tow bar as a nose wheel chock and still had the tow bar on the ground in front of the nose tire. This inspector saw

the tow bar and asked the applicant if he was sure he was ready, and he then realized he had forgotten to stow the tow bar.

The applicant then briefed the inspectors that he had no survival gear in the aircraft since his survival bag was being repacked. The applicant was only wearing a T-shirt and jeans and it was approximately 32F.

Flight portion:

It was noted the applicant never turned on the LED landing light, position lights, or anticollision lights during aircraft operations. When questioned why he did not use any lights, he stated that since it was day he didn't turn them on. He was debriefed to use external lighting to increase safety.

This inspector briefed, on the ground and in flight, the required steep turn maneuver details IAW the Commercial ACS. The first steep turn maneuver was out of tolerance due to shallow bank and altitude deviation. The applicant, contrary to the preflight and inflight briefing, also rolled out of the first steep turn and continued straight. After approximately 30 seconds, this inspector told the applicant his steep turn was not within tolerances and again briefed the applicant that the steep turn series consisted of rolling from one direction immediately into the other. The second steep turn attempts were satisfactory.

The applicant stated during the oral exam that his aircraft stall indications were just the red stall warning light, with no noticeable buffeting. Both inspectors sensed noticeable buffeting prior to the red stall warning light illuminating during the power on and power off stall maneuvers. The applicant was slow to complete the stall recovery procedures.

During the Big Lake VOR rwy 7 approach, the applicant was directed by this inspector "cleared direct to the Big Lake VOR, maintain 3,000' until established, cleared the Big Lake VOR 7 approach." The applicant centered up the VOR CDI with a "from" (instead of "TO") indication and was delayed in proceeding direct to the VOR. He appeared confused about how to properly fly the approach. The applicant flew S turning ground tracks (with full scale deflection from side to side at times) instead of tracking the proper radial, and failed to properly fly the course reversal 45/180. The applicant asked if he could repeat the approach and this inspector allowed him to reattempt. During the 2nd attempt the applicant still failed to smoothly track the inbound radial. The applicant repeatedly set the paper approach book on the floor behind him and would seem to forget the approach details, and would then struggle to retrieve the approach book and turn to the correct page.

The applicant first used his foggles, but due to the applicant needing his reading glasses to read the VOR instrument, this inspector allowed the applicant to fly without foggles. While on the final portion of the VOR approach to the Big Lake airport, this inspector visually detected another aircraft on base/final and directed the applicant to climb to 1,300' for traffic avoidance. The applicant later stated he became confused by this instruction to climb and thought he was done flying the approach. Because of his confusion, he didn't verbalize when arriving at the missed approach point and chose to simply continue flying beyond the missed approach point without saying anything to this Inspector.

The applicant's traffic pattern entries at both Wasilla and Birchwood were non-standard and potentially could have conflicted with any other aircraft established in the traffic pattern. The applicant did not enter using a 45 degree entry to downwind and was not on altitude. Fortunately the traffic patterns were empty.

Wasilla traffic patterns: During the applicant's normal landing he touched down slightly nose low and bounced several times. The applicant taxied back and was directed to perform a short field takeoff. He asked this inspector again if it was a short field, or soft field takeoff. He was again told it was a short field takeoff. The applicant then performed a soft field takeoff, contrary to what he was just told, and confirmed to do.

The engine failure in the traffic pattern (emergency landing) scenario resulted in a low altitude go around directed by this inspector. This inspector was required to direct the go around because the applicant was starting to complete a low altitude very aggressive right turn to align with the runway at midfield. During the directed go around, the applicant applied full throttle with the prop RPM still set to the lowest RPM (course propeller pitch to extend glide range). This inspector was required to quickly push in the prop control to ensure the aircraft engine provided maximum performance during this critical phase of flight.

Birchwood traffic patterns: During the Birchwood engine failure in the traffic pattern scenario (emergency landing), this Inspector directed the applicant to set his throttle to zero thrust while on right downwind to runway 20R. The applicant's downwind spacing was wide and altitude was slightly low. The end result of the approach was the aircraft low and still approximately 45 degrees from the runway heading. This inspector again directed the applicant to go around to prevent a dangerous situation from developing.

The applicant was then directed to perform a short field landing (in order to end this evaluation early). The applicant flew 20 MPH fast (he flew the normal approach speed vs the slower short field approach speed), and touched down hitting the nose wheel first and bouncing back into the air, and then bounced between the nose wheel and main gear several times. Because he was excessively fast on approach (not +- 5kts IAW ACS), his landing distance was excessive. The applicant did not perform the short field landing IAW the POH or as he briefed he would.

Inflight powerplant failure: the applicant required prompting to demonstrate completion of the appropriate POH checklist for powerplant failure.

System malfunctions: When given a simulated alternator failure scenario, until prompted by this inspector, the applicant failed to demonstrate the proper procedure to possibly reset the alternator circuit. He did not refer to any emergency checklist.

The applicant filed a VFR flight plan with Kenai Flight Service Station. During the 1 hour takeoff delay to defrost the aircraft the applicant displayed poor judgment by failing to update the departure/opening time in his flight plan. During the full stop landing at Birchwood, another aircraft radioed the applicant to inform him that Kenai Flight Service was looking for him because he was overdue closing his flight plan.

A thorough post flight debriefing was conducted with the applicant. The applicant stated he understood why the evaluation was unsatisfactory and he took notes during the debriefing. He reviewed and signed the FAA Form 8410-3 and took a picture of the document for his records.

//////////End of Statement//////////