



RECORD OF CORRESPONDENCE

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Date: August 22, 2014
NTSB Accident Number: CEN14FA473

Several witnesses observed the accident airplane depart from TA25 and/or flew their own airplane out of TA25 within an hour of the accident. Witnesses who observed the accident airplane depart were positioned on the TA25 parking ramp, near midfield.

- Bode Zietz – parking ramp coordinator for inbound and outbound aircraft
 - For aircraft departures (which occurred following the company party) he cleared one airplane at a time out of the parking ramp toward the runway. Each airplane would then back taxi on the runway for takeoff. After takeoff, he cleared the next airplane out of the ramp to back taxi on the runway.
 - The runway lights were set at “high” for the departing airplanes.
 - He observed the accident pilot perform his preflight and didn’t notice any anomalies or unusual behavior.
 - The accident airplane back taxied to the end of runway, performed an engine run up, and departed on Runway 35. The accident airplane trailed a Cessna 550. He estimated the trail distance to be about 4 or 5 minutes.
 - The airplane lifted off near midfield and climbed to about 500 feet above ground level (AGL), then started a right turn. As the right turn continued, the airplane’s bank angle slowly increased toward a “knife edge” and then the navigation lights became vertically aligned. The airplane subsequently descended out of view.
 - He attempted to call the pilot on the radio, with no reply. Airport operations were discontinued and a visual search for the airplane commenced on the north perimeter of the airport. Several pilots parked on the ramp tuned their aircraft’s radios to 121.5 and listened for an ELT transmission, with no transmissions heard. Following the unsuccessful visual search and with no ELT transmissions heard, departures were resumed.

- Subsequently, an airplane on departure leg noticed a ground fire northeast of Runway 35.
- Kevin Rowe –pilot of Hawker 800, who departed after the accident airplane
 - He observed the accident airplane utilize the full runway for takeoff. The airplane lifted off near midfield and climbed to an altitude less than 1,000 feet AGL, then began a “smooth right turn toward the east. The bank angle continued to increase toward a “knife edge” and then both navigation lights aligned visually. The airplane subsequently descended out of sight to the northeast of the airport.
 - He heard the ramp coordinator attempt contact with the accident pilot via radio, with no reply.
 - On his own departure, he stated there were no visible references for the horizon after passing the airport boundary. With no ground lights or stars present, he described the departure environment as very “murky” and “like a black hole”. He immediately transitioned from attempting to fly visually to his instruments.
- James Doyle – pilot of Hawker 800, who departed after the accident airplane
 - He estimated that the accident airplane trailed the preceding airplane, a Citation 550, by about 3 minutes.
 - He observed the accident airplane make an initial right turn and then he looked away. The initial turn that he observed appeared to be relatively smooth and at a slow rate.
 - His own departure in a Hawker 800 was “extremely dark”, with no ground lighting, moon, or stars to establish orientation.
 - The brightness of the runway lights was “fine” for this departure.
- James Napuano – pilot of King Air, who departed prior to the accident airplane
 - His arrival into TA25 was “very busy” but ramp crew did a great job with parking.
 - His departure from TA25 seemed like he was flying into a “no man’s land”, with no horizon visible and no ground lights in view. He immediately transitioned to flying off his instruments.
 - He thought the runway lights were set a least at medium and his departure was not negatively affected by the airport lighting.
- Billy Garland – pilot of Cessna 550, who departed immediately prior to accident airplane
 - He thought his arrival to the uncontrolled was very congested.
 - Ground crew did an excellent job with coordinating the parking ramp.
 - Ramp coordinator released one airplane at a time onto the runway for departure.

- His departure was flown into a very dark night, no moon, no stars, and no ground lights.
 - He did not remember the accident pilot making any radio calls during his departure, since he switched his radio frequency quickly to obtain an air traffic control clearance soon after takeoff.
 - He estimated his own airplane weighed about 12,500 pounds.
- Brent Schmenk – aviation manager for Cook Canyon Ranch Aviation and was working at the parking ramp
 - Fuel was not available at TA25.
 - During his preflight, accident pilot seemed to be a little impatient and in a hurry to depart.
 - He noticed the accident airplane became airborne near the midfield taxiway, but he did not view the departure past the midfield.
 - He activated the company's emergency response plan and notified Fort Worth Center of a possible accident at 11:29 PM.