

From: Lynn.E.Braswell [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, September 09, 2016 7:39 AM
To: Scott Arnold [REDACTED]
Subject: CEN16LA347 Autogyro Accident, Bryant, AR

On September 3, 2016 at 1635 CDST the FAA was notified of an autogyro aircraft accident at Saline County Municipal Airport (KSUZ). The autogyro was being operated by Mr. Jack Forrest Payne, Jr., 75 years of age. Mr. Payne held a Private Pilot Certificate for (ASEL) Airplane Single Engine Land. Witnesses Mr. Ted Berg and his son Joey Berg, both being experienced autogyro pilots, stated Mr. Payne did a high speed flyby heading south and was turning left base for runway 2 when Mr. Berg saw Mr. Payne's autogyro begin to porpoise. During a pitch up, Mr. Payne appeared to nose the autogyro over and got into a Power Push-over situation, causing the autogyro to begin to summersault, resulting in the autogyro impacting the terrain. Mr. Ted Berg stated earlier most of the autogyro operators had landed because of air turbulence around the airport. Mr. Berg and others tried to talk Mr. Payne into not flying because of the air turbulence. Mr. Berg mentioned Mr. Payne hadn't flown in a while, a month or so, and that Mr. Payne lacked sufficient proficiency and skills to operate an autogyro of this type. Mr. Berg stated Mr. Payne was an inexperienced, low time, non-rated autogyro pilot. Also, Mr. Berg stated that Mr. Payne had a macho attitude and could not be told anything. The coroner noted Mr. Payne death was from blunt force impact into the terrain.

In discussions with two autogyro experts, Mr. Ron Menzie, a Designated Pilot Examiner (DPE) for gyroplanes, and Mr. Ted Berg, one of the witnesses to the accident and a highly skilled and respected gyroplane pilot for this make and model aircraft, they stated:

- (1) Increased speed in this make/model autogyro causes it to become more sensitive in its handling and porpoising can occur.
- (2) Dropping the nose of an autogyro (especially at high speed) can result in a zero or negative "G" force that would uncouple pressure on the rotor head, causing the elimination of air flowing through the rotor blades (stall) that would cause the nose of the autogyro to tuck forward and initiate what is known as a power pushover of which there is no possibility of recovery.
- (3) The pilot was a low time inexperienced pilot in this make and model of autogyro,
- (4) There was turbulence in the vicinity of SUZ and all other autogyro pilots had landed for the day. The pilot in command did not adhere to the warning from the other autogyro pilots about the turbulence and elected to fly.