



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Mitchell Gallo
Aviation Accident Investigator
Central Region

Date: January 22, 2017
Person Contacted: Tiffany Miller; [REDACTED]
NTSB Accident Number: CEN17FA080

Narrative:

During a telephone conversation, Tiffany Miller stated that her husband, Clayton Miller, had flown a 15-20 minute flight with his mother prior to the accident flight. The purpose of the accident flight was to take his cousin flying and to allow his cousin to take photos. Mrs. Miller stated that during the accident flight, the airplane stayed in “ground effect for a little while” before climbing after takeoff. Mrs. Miller stated that it “looked like a stall” and it should not have stalled. Mrs. Miller said the airplane “pitched hard over to the left.” Mrs. Miller said that during the previous flight, Mr. Miller flew over the town with his mother, and the airplane was out of her sight. Mrs. Miller stated that she was unable to hear engine noise because she was inside the car at the end of the runway with his mother during the accident flight.

Mitchell Gallo
Air Safety Investigator



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Mitchell Gallo
Aviation Accident Investigator
Central Region

Date: January 25, 2017
Person Contacted: Luke Boedeker; [REDACTED]
NTSB Accident Number: CEN17FA080

Narrative:

During a telephone conversation, Luke Boedeker stated that in February or March 2014, Clayton Miller was hired as a full-time employee at his aerial spraying and firefighting businesses where Mr. Miller loaded airplanes and provided ground support. For fire support, Mr. Miller would travel to provide ground support/relief. Locally, Mr. Miller would also wash airplanes.

Mr. Boedeker stated that he bought N91Z and then sent the aircraft registration application to the Federal Aviation Administration "a good while" ago. He said that it was a "mystery" as to why the airplane's registration had not been updated. He said that he bought the airplane in May 2016 and he checked out Mr. Miller in August 2016. Mr. Boedeker said the he did not charge Mr. Miller for the use of the airplane. The reason Mr. Boedeker did not charge for the use of the airplane was to allow company employees to use the airplane "recreationally," and it was part of the flying service. Mr. Boedeker said that he bought the airplane under the company so that employees could "fly for fun." Mr. Boedeker said that the "secondary benefit" for the airplane's purchase was allow those who aspired to become aerial applicator pilots to gain experience. Mr. Boedeker stated that he would also pay for the airplane's fuel. Mr. Boedeker said that Mr. Miller had "full autonomy" in the use of the airplane, and it was based in Wellington, Texas, where Mr. Miller lived.

Mr. Boedeker stated that aerial application businesses have "always been short" of pilots and it is a job that is based upon "mentorship." He said that "tailwheel time and mentorship" is what is "valuable." He said that "working on the ground" is "valuable" and to learn from the ground operations.

Mr. Boedeker stated that he did not know Mr. Miller to have “irresponsible habits” and did not know of “anything that was a warning sign” and if he would have known then he would have not allowed Mr. Miller “decision making” in the operation of the airplane.

Mr. Boedeker stated that agricultural flying is “atypical” and people “always confuse” agricultural application pilots as “reckless cowboys.” He said that agricultural application flying does not warrant “reckless behavior,” and the pilots are “professional.” The flight maneuvers are different in aerial application than in other flying.

Mr. Boedeker stated that the accident flight maneuvers appeared similar to aerial application maneuvers, which may have influenced Mr. Miller in performing similar maneuvers. Mr. Boedeker stated that aerial application flight maneuvers are “not dangerous” but with “a lack of experience,” it can be dangerous. Mr. Boedeker stated that maybe Mr. Miller had a “lapse in judgement” in performing similar maneuvers.

Mr. Boedeker said that Mr. Miller worked his way from the “ground up. Mr. Miller was “very concerned” about maintaining a “level of responsibility.” Mr. Miller wanted to do everything “to show that he had responsibility.”

Mitchell Gallo
Air Safety Investigator