



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Courtney Liedler
Aviation Accident Investigator
Central Region

Date: October 18, 2018
Person Contacted: Sydney Dee Ann Whitlow
NTSB Accident Number: CEN18FA389

Narrative:

During a telephone conversation with Ms. Whitlow, she stated the pilot had slept-in the morning of the accident until about 0830. He had a “leisurely” morning at home until he left for work at the US Air National Guard (ANG). Before leaving, the pilot said the weather was not good and he would not be flying the RV-4. Later, he called her from the airport and told Ms. Whitlow he was going to fly. She asked the pilot if he was “sure about flying due to the weather,” and he said the winds had decreased and now it looked good for the flight. Then he told her when to stand outside the house to see him fly by. As the pilot flew overhead, she saw the right wing “tip up” and then, “all of sudden,” the airplane went upside down. She added that the airplane climbed briefly when the pilot “tipped the wing,” then the airplane dove down. The airplane was flying so low and so fast, she knew he was not going to be able to recover. She started running toward the airplane; she recalled the airplane bounced off the ground, went into the trees, and caught fire on the ground.

She stated the pilot had been flying since he was 16 or 17 years old and had been working on his certification to fly in a tailwheel airplane; he flew C130s but not tailwheels. She also stated the pilot had flown Cessna 150s and 172s prior. This was the pilot’s first solo flight in the accident airplane.

During conversations with Ms. Whitlow, the pilot had expressed that he was having a difficult time transitioning from the C130 to the RV-4. He said the “feel of the airplane” was much different. He also explained that in the C130 the pilot sits much higher and, in the RV-4, he sat lower with less of a field of vision.

When asked if the pilot had told her of any other issues he had experienced with the airplane, she stated she recalled the pilot mentioning the avionics “went out” once when he was flying with the instructor; and just how different the airplane was from a C130 or Cessna.