

National Transportation Safety Board

Office of Aviation Safety
Central Region



CEN22FA405

RECORD OF CONVERSATION

David Stoneking, Owner/Pilot

September 12, 2022

Interviewee: David Stoneking, Owner/Pilot
Date/Time: September 12, 2022 / 1029-1110 CDT
Location: Telephone Call
Investigator: Andrew Todd Fox, NTSB Air Safety Investigator

Mr. David Stoneking (owner/pilot) and NTSB Investigator Fox discussed the following:

Earlier in the week, on August 29, 2022, Mr. Stoneking accepted delivery of his factory-new Cirrus SR22 airplane at the Cirrus Aircraft Vision Center located at the McGhee Tyson Airport (TYS), near Knoxville, Tennessee. He had no previous pilot flying experience in a Cirrus airplane besides a demonstration flight that he completed a couple of years before he purchased his airplane. Mr. Stoneking was scheduled to receive flight training from a Cirrus Aircraft flight instructor after he accepted delivery of his airplane.

The first flight in his airplane consisted of a takeoff, traffic pattern, and landing. No flight instruction was provided during this initial 10-15 minute delivery flight. After the initial flight, a Cirrus Aircraft flight instructor, Mr. Christopher Jensen, was assigned to complete Mr. Stoneking's transition training in his new airplane. The first task completed was simulator training on how to use the Cirrus Airframe Parachute System (CAPS), which was followed by training on the Perspective+ system using a tabletop simulator.

On August 30, 2022, Mr. Stoneking began flight training in his airplane with Mr. Jensen as the flight instructor. Mr. Stoneking stated that nothing was "normal" with the flights because he could not fly at typical airspeeds during the approach because the airplane had to be flown at 150 knots in the Knoxville Class-C airspace. Additionally, the engine had to be operated at or above 75% power because it was still being broken in. Mr. Jensen asked what Mr. Stoneking wanted to accomplish during his flight training, and Mr. Stoneking told Mr. Jensen that he needed to learn how to fly instrument approaches and to make takeoff and landings in the airplane. Mr. Stoneking believed it was odd that Mr. Jensen did not provide more feedback on how to fly the airplane, such as providing the different airspeeds to be flown during the different phases of flight.

On August 31, 2022, the weather at TYS was windy, so Mr. Stoneking asked his Mr. Jensen if they could fly to an uncontrolled airport where they could work on flying the airplane in the traffic pattern and conduct takeoff and landings. It was during this flight that Mr. Jensen first provided the reference airspeeds for downwind, base, and final approach. Mr. Stoneking stated that he placed a note with the reference airspeeds on the cockpit dashboard.

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Mr. Stoneking stated that between Wednesday evening and early Thursday morning he woke up shivering and sweating. Mr. Stoneking clarified that after the accident he was diagnosed with COVID-19. On the morning of September 1, 2022, Mr. Stoneking told his Mr. Jensen that he did not feel well, and the decision was made to fly to Mr. Stoneking's homebase located at David Wayne Hooks Memorial Airport (DWH), Spring, Texas. Mr. Stoneking explained that if he felt better on Friday, they would continue his transition flight training in the Houston area on Friday and possibly on Saturday. Mr. Jensen had not planned on flying to DWH and, as such, he had to reschedule some other work obligations and kennel his dog for at least one night. Mr. Stoneking explained that the plan was for Mr. Jensen to stay at least Thursday night at his residence.

The first flight leg was supposed to be from TYS to Alexandria International Airport (AEX), Alexandria, Louisiana. However, due to adverse weather that impacted their intended route, the flight diverted to Monroe Regional Airport (MLU), Monroe, Louisiana. Mr. Stoneking stated that Mr. Jensen fell asleep for a portion of the flight from TYS to MLU. Mr. Stoneking stated that he flew most of the flight using the autopilot, making necessary heading changes using the heading bug on the primary flight display (PFD).

Mr. Stoneking stated the airplane was topped-off with fuel after landing at MLU and that they were on the ground for about 30-45 minutes, during which Mr. Stoneking and Ms. Hazelwood (passenger) each drank a cup of coffee, and Mr. Jensen drank a soda.

Mr. Stoneking stated that shortly after they departed MLU, about 10 minutes into the flight, Mr. Jensen told him that he needed to urinate. Mr. Stoneking offered Mr. Jensen one of his "Little John" pilot urinals, but Mr. Jensen declined to use the urinal. Mr. Stoneking stated that Mr. Jensen appeared to be in discomfort, shifting around in his seat and grimacing, for the remainder of the flight and did not speak much or provide any feedback until they got closer to DWH.

Mr. Stoneking stated that during most of the flight from MLU to DWH he used the autopilot and made ATC assigned turns with the heading bug on the PFD. They were flying on an instrument flight rules (IFR) flight plan, and ATC issued several vectors to keep the airplane clear from areas of adverse weather.

As the flight approached DWH, Mr. Stoneking listened to the Automatic Terminal Information Service (ATIS) broadcast and selected the RNAV runway 17R approach at DWH using the Perspective+ system, but he was unsure if he activated the approach.

While the flight tracked north toward Conroe, Texas, the ATC controller asked if they wanted the full RNAV runway 17R approach or the visual approach to runway 17R. Mr.

Jensen replied to the ATC controller that he wanted the visual approach to runway 17R. Mr. Stoneking told Mr. Jensen that he had never flown a visual approach before and asked how to use the Perspective+ system during this type of approach. Mr. Jensen then showed Mr. Stoneking how to "scroll-down" on the Perspective+ display to see data associated with a visual approach. The ATC controller issued a heading to intercept the final approach course to runway 17R at DWH, cleared the flight for the visual approach, and told the flight crew to contact the DWH tower controller.

Mr. Stoneking stated that he saw the runway and its associated precision approach path indicators (PAPI) lights after the airplane turned onto the final approach course and that the airplane appeared to be on a proper descent path to the runway. The airplane's airspeed began to decrease as the flight continued toward the runway, and Mr. Jensen told him to "give it some throttle" to increase airspeed. Mr. Stoneking increased the throttle but noted that he did not hear the engine "roar" with power. Mr. Jensen reportedly stated "My airplane" or "I've got the controls" shortly after Mr. Stoneking increased the throttle. Mr. Stoneking estimated that "only a few seconds" transpired between his increase of throttle and when Mr. Jensen took control of the airplane.

Mr. Stoneking stated that after Mr. Jensen took control of the airplane, the airplane descended below the proper glidepath and that he could no longer not see the PAPI system or the runway. Mr. Stoneking stated that in the moments before the accident Mr. Jensen rolled the airplane into a left-wing-down attitude, likely trying to maneuver the airplane into a clearing left of the airplane's position. The airplane impacted several trees before it came to rest in a wooded mobile home neighborhood.

When asked, Mr. Stoneking did not recall completing the prelanding checklist but stated that he believed it would have been something that would have been completed before the accident. Additionally, he could not specifically recall individual positions of the throttle, mixture, and fuel selector at the time of the accident; however, he recalled the ignition/magneto switch was positioned on both. Mr. Stoneking stated that he believed the autopilot was still on when Mr. Jensen took control of the airplane.

Mr. Stoneking stated that Mr. Jensen did not ask him to verify control positions or troubleshoot anything in the moments before the accident, nor did they discuss any anomalies with the airplane or if they should deploy the CAPS. Mr. Stoneking stated that he believed the engine was operating at the time of the accident, but thought it was odd that he did not hear the engine "roar" with power after Mr. Jensen further increased the throttle.

--- End of interview summary ---

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