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Subject: CEN24LA366, Memorandum of Conversation

Contact: Bethany Fayard, pilot of N73154

Bethany Fayard stated during a telephone conversation that the purpose of the flight was to complete three cross-country flights totaling 10 hour of flight time. The accident flight was the first of the three cross-country flights. She said she did a lot of preflight planning and watched videos on how to use "some of the controls." She said that she was "familiar" with N73154 and had flown it but had not flown it much on cross-country flights since most of the flights she had flown were local. She said that she did not know how to change the transponder squawk code until she asked the owner of N73154. She said that changing the squawk code was "weird" because you had to press a button and then press a button again and she was "not really familiar" with it. She said that she wanted to be more familiar with N73154 because she was going to have passengers aboard the accident flight. On the day of the accident, the preflight was "good" and N73154 had just returned from a cross-country flight that she thought was to Madison. She said that during the preflight of N73154, all of the systems were "good" and she extended the wing flaps, she checked all the bolts, and she moved the elevator when she checked the empennage.

She said that after departed for the accident flight, she contacted Houston air traffic control who transferred her to Memphis air traffic control at which time she wanted to be at an altitude of 4,500 ft, but due to scattered clouds at 4,900 ft, she had to fly N73154 at an altitude of 3,500 ft. She said the autopilot was on, the altitude hold was on, the primary GPS (Garmin G650) was on, and Foreflight, which was on a mount, was on. She said, "everything was normal." Prior to the autopilot problems she had during the accident flight, the autopilot was "fine," it flew "straight," flew the way it

was supposed to, and it would beep when the trim needed to be adjusted. She said she would adjust the trim when the autopilot would beep. She said the autopilot had a small round gauge that would indicate to trim up and down. She said the autopilot beeped and when she went to trim the trim wheel, it "had no friction" as if it were "loose." She said that the trim wheel was broken. The autopilot kept beeping to trim the aircraft. She thought that since she could not trim the aircraft, she would have to turn the autopilot off and fly the aircraft manually. She turned the autopilot off by pressing a button on the control yoke that turns the autopilot off and another button on the control yoke that turns off the altitude hold. The aircraft was in a slight and slow climb after she turned the autopilot off. She pushed on the control yoke to maintain 3,500 ft, but the control yoke was "hard" to push and "did not want to move." She then pressed the altitude hold button several times, but it had no effect on the ability to push or pull the yoke. The yoke would move a little when she applied a lot of force to the yoke. She said she has a lot of strength, and she lifts 100 lb boxes at work. She said she would push and pull on the yoke and it would not move. She said the autopilot was off because she could move the yoke left and right. When asked by the NTSB IIC if there was an audible tone when she turned the autopilot off, she said that she did not remember and that it stopped beeping. She said the autopilot on light was no longer on. She said that she did not remember receiving training on a stuck elevator.

She said that she contacted Memphis Center and told them she was having trouble with the trim and elevator controls, and she had to land N73154. She did not declare an emergency because she did not want to panic the passengers. She asked Memphis Center to help her find an airport to land to see what was wrong with the elevator. She said Memphis Center told her there was an airport about a mile away and she told Memphis Center that she could not see it. She said that she told Memphis Center she could not see the airport and then Memphis Center told her that Ackerman was 10 mi east of her position. She turned the aircraft toward Ackerman. She said that an old GPS on the right side of the instrument panel was on and displayed a message that it was going to shut down in "so many seconds." She did not remember if she told Memphis Center that the aircraft was having electrical problems. She said in her scan of the instrument panel, everything looked okay, she looked at the engine monitor, and when she looked at the ammeter, it indicated a negative number, but she did not remember its value, and the volts indicated 12V. The current and volts were indicated on the engine monitor. The appearance of the current display was small, and the appearance of the volts display was large. She said that in her scan of instruments, one of the things she looks for is positive amps and positive volts. The ammeter and voltmeter indications were normal prior to the electrical problems. She said the Garmin G650 GPS was now "scrambled" and it never had a countdown or shutdown. She said there were no warning/annunciations including those of the

ammeter, voltmeter, and Garmin G650, and then everything "went off," which included the communication radios and the GPS, except for the G5. She said that she did not think of using her cellular phone to communicate with air traffic control. She said that she used Foreflight on her iPad, which was now held by the front passenger, to fly direct to Ackerman. The front passenger saw Ackerman, and she turned the aircraft so she could also see Ackerman and flew toward Ackerman. She said she had already started to reduce engine power to not allow the aircraft to climb. The aircraft altitude did not change much with engine power at idle during the first pass over the airport and during the second pass over the airport, the aircraft altitude was 1,300 ft on final, but the aircraft was too high for landing, so she made a third pass. On the third and final pass she slipped the aircraft to lose altitude. She said she had horizontal control of the aircraft, and it landed on the centerline about mid-field or a little farther. She said that she did not have any control over where the aircraft touched down. She said that she applied brakes along with her front passenger applying brakes during landing rollout. The aircraft overran the departure end of the runway and into a down sloping grass area, then became airborne, and settled onto its nose and nosed over.

When asked by the NTSB Investigator-in-Charge (IIC) how she checked the flight controls during preflight of N73154, she said she turned the master switch on, extended the flaps, moved the yoke left, right, forward and back. She said the pitch "felt normal." She said she did not activate the autopilot until the aircraft reached cruise altitude and she manually flew the aircraft for about 30-45 minutes, and everything was "normal" and she had "free and clear flight controls." When asked what the voltmeter indicated, she said it was positive but did not remember the value. She asked if 12 volts was normal. She said during her scan of electrical instruments she looks for "positive" numbers and not a specific numerical value. She said that when she trimmed the aircraft for the accident flight's takeoff using the trim wheel, the trim wheel "felt normal." The trim wheel "felt loose" when the autopilot was on, and with the aircraft at 3,500 ft, and that feeling of looseness did not change for the remainder of the flight. She said there was no trim adjustment on the yoke and the only trim adjustment was the trim wheel.

When asked by the NTSB IIC if she could move the yoke for pitch on N73154, she said "it was not possible." She said that she might have been able to move the yoke forward and aft about ½ in in either direction using her the full strength of her arms.

When asked by the NTSB IIC what videos she watched prior to the accident flight, she said she watched YouTube videos on how to operate the Garmin G650 to refresh her memory because she had been flying Civil Air Patrol aircraft equipped

with Garmin G1000 avionics. She watched YouTube videos on the S-TEC and on the autopilot to refresh her memory on the avionics. She said she texted the aircraft owner of N73154 asking the model of the GPS and autopilot several days before the accident flight. She said she received her pilot's certificate in 1997 and returned to flying in August 2020 and has flown with instructors to re-learn flying. She last flew on September 8 and 20, 2024.

When asked when she turned the engine off, she said that she had the engine at idle for the approach and thought she "cut the ignition" when N73154 landed. She said the aircraft was "fast" on landing.

When asked by the NTSB IIC if she saw any popped circuit breakers, she said she did not see any popped circuit breaker during the flight.

When asked by the NTSB IIC if she received an aircraft checkout in N73154, she said the aircraft owner provided her a checkout.

When asked by the NTSB IIC if she used the aircraft checklist and if a flight manual and checklist were aboard N73154, she said she did not use the checklist and a checklist and flight manual were aboard the aircraft.