

Interview Summary

Interviewee: Tess Davidson, Next of Kin (NOK)

Representative: None

Date, Time: 2/2/2020, 0945

Location: At Tess Davidson's Home-Huntington Beach, CA

Interviewer: Dujuan Sevillian, Ph.D. (NTSB), Sathya Silva, Ph.D. (NTSB), Fabian Salazar, (NTSB)

During the interview, Ms. Davidson stated the following:

She did not see Ara the morning of the accident. He woke up at 6am and she was not a morning person. Typically, she woke up around 10am and texted Ara when she woke up. The morning of the accident, her text didn't go through (she noticed the blue line at the top of the iMessage). Saturday night, 1/25, they went to bed about 1030pm. On Friday, 1/24, they had lunch, went to Macy's for pillows, and watched a movie. She estimated Ara awoke around 6am that day and that they went to bed around 10-1030p. On Thursday, 1/23, she was coming back from a trip to Seattle and met Ara at Long Beach Airport. They got dinner (burrito), watched TV, and went to bed about 10-1030p. Ara would typically go to bed about 10-1030p and awake around 6am. She had flown with Ara on several occasions, once to Napa. She described him as a professional and safe pilot. He always checked weather on his iPad using Foreflight the night before a flight. He had no problem cancelling flights. He had told her on several occasions that Patty from OC helicopters would get upset if he cancelled a flight, and he responded by sending her a screenshot of the weather. He would not be pressured into flying.

They had met online. She worked at Children's Medical as a respiratory therapist and was on the flight team there.

She knew he was flying Kobe the day of the accident, but typically Ara did not mention when he was flying Kobe. Often, when he got back from a flight, he would tell her who he flew. Before Kobe's retirement, she often knew before a flight when Ara was flying him to basketball games. She had Ara's logbooks and would provide them with a subpoena. She knew he flew the accident route often. He had time in the A-star, jet ranger (when IEX had the aircraft), and Robinson 22 and 44s when he was flight instructing.

She found out about the accident because Garret had called her and told her there was an accident and he was on the way to the scene.

Ara was not facing any stresses in the days prior to the accident. He was in good health. She had known him for 7 years. They had been living together for 7 years as well. He was "one of the

only people [she] knew that was happy to go to work every day.” Even on days he was off, he would go help out at work washing aircraft, or bringing lunch.

He had spoken with her regarding a pilot named David Harvey and she recalled he didn’t feel that Harvey had a lot of common sense. Ara kept a list of issues he had with Harvey in the notes section of his phone.

He first became interested in aviation when he was emigrating from Lebanon, she estimated this was sometime in the 1980s. He was flying by himself and took a flight to Cypress and then to LA. On the flight he was seated next to a helicopter mechanic and he had given Ara a magazine with helicopters on it. After moving to the US, he drove to the Grand Canyon and took a flight there. After that trip, he began flying around 1999 or 2000. Prior to flying, he was saving up money to fly. He worked at the Jewelry District downtown and had worked as a parking attendant. Before Island Express he worked as a flight instructor at Group 3. He loved teaching. In addition to his job at IEX, he also flew a client 2-3 times per year to the Mt. Baldy, antelope canyon area. He held no other jobs. Gordy Cox was the DO before Garrett, and he would know more.

His favorite thing about the job was the flying. He had been approached for other jobs like EMS, but he enjoyed the amount of flying he did at IEX. He said that at EMS pilots may fly 1-2 hours in a day where at IEX, he would get 5 hours per day. He liked to be busy. He had told her about one emergency situation over LAX where ATC had directed him to turn and there was an unknown aircraft in that direction and there was a near midair. He had described encounters with bad weather on the way to Catalina where he had to turn around. He did not use prescription medication. Occasionally, if he would eat peanuts or peanut oil and would get a headache. Even in those cases, he refused to take medication. He drank alcohol rarely; his last drink was a few months prior. Even if he did drink when they went out, he would only have one. He drank one cup of coffee per day. Typically, he would get it from the vending machine at work or from the Keurig they had at work. He typically flew with a hydro flask with water or Gatorade but she did not know if he had it on him the day of the accident.

He only had one phone and it was his personal cell phone (iPhone 11) and the current provider was Verizon. He also had an iPad mini he used for preflight. She did not know his passcodes and his iPhone 11 had facial recognition in addition to a passcode.

She knew he had flown the same flight the day before the accident. She wasn’t sure if it was the same passengers though. He had sent her a picture of him sitting in front of a TV at the FBO in Camerillo. He got back home that day about when she was done with work around 730p. She wasn’t sure when he had landed. She felt that with his normal sleep schedule, he seemed rested. He occasionally took naps on his days off but it was not routine. He never set an alarm and woke up on his own around 6am even on days off. She felt he was a morning person.