



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Stephen Stein
Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Office of Aviation Safety - Eastern Region

NTSB Accident Number: ERA14FA387
Aircraft Registration & Make/Model: N66241; Cessna 150M
Accident Location: Mount Pleasant, SC
Accident Date: August 14, 2014

Note: The following interviews were provided by the Investigator –In-Charge (IIC) by Stephen Stein, NTSB, who documented the interviews.

Interview Summary

Bill Pearson
Owner, Coastal Aviation, Inc.

Interview date/time: August 14, 2014

Interviewer was Stein.

Mr. Pearson stated that the father of the student pilot and owner of the airplane is an aircraft broker who works out of John's island, a business partner to Clark Hangar. The student pilot's father walked in the door one day and requested flight training for his three sons. Mr. Pearson stated that he only saw the accident pilot, student pilot and the student pilot's father fly the airplane. He first came into contact with the accident pilot after he advertised an open flight instructor position. The accident pilot responded about mid-July and told Mr. Pearson that he was looking for a job because his wife was a teacher and they needed more money. Mr. Pearson stated that the accident pilot was hired in late July to instruct 8 students. According to Mr. Pearson, Coastal Aviation, Inc. provides flight instruction under CFR Part 61.

According to Mr. Pearson, the accident pilot told him that he would receive his flight instructor certificate in late July. The accident pilot was supposed to start on July 28, but he had not yet

completed his check ride. Mr. Pearson stated that he never saw the accident pilot's resume, but recalled the accident pilot telling him that he had completed some flight training at Falcon Field in Atlanta, Georgia and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach, Florida. The flight school owner added that he did not know how many hours the accident pilot had in the accident airplane make and model. The accident pilot flew with the student pilot on August 11, August 12, and August 14. Mr. Pearson was unable to produce a copy of the accident pilot's flight instructor certificate from his files and subsequently stated that he never saw a paper record of the accident pilot's instructor certificate.

The owner of the flight school reported that the pilot appeared alert and awake on the day of the accident and did not exhibit any abnormal behavior.



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Interview Summary

Cole Gaither

Father of Student Pilot and Owner of the Accident Airplane

Interview date/time: August 26, 2014; 1726 EDT
Telephone Interview

Interviewer was Stein.

According to Mr. Gaither, Bill Pearson told him that was going to assign Graham Borland, the accident pilot, to provide flight instruction to Mr. Gaither's son because his other flight instructor was "too big" for the cockpit. Mr. Gaither did not have a pre-existing relationship with the accident pilot. The student pilot's father and Mr. Borland repositioned the accident airplane from John's Island to Mt. Pleasant for the student pilot's convenience as his son recently started taking classes at a nearby college. Mr. Gaither stated that he did not feel he needed to cover anything about the airplane with Mr. Borland because he held a flight instructor certificate. When asked about the operation of the flap system, Mr. Gaither stated that the flaps functioned normally. He added that he used full flaps during his landing at John's Island, but he did not discuss or review the flap system with Mr. Borland. During the repositioning flight, Mr. Gaither flew solo to Mt.

Pleasant where Mr. Borland boarded the airplane and occupied the right seat. Mr. Borland did not fly the airplane until Mr. Gaither had disembarked at John's Island Airport. Mr. Borland returned to Mt. Pleasant on a solo flight. According to Mr. Gaither, the accident pilot told him that he had accumulated over 650 hours of flight time and was qualified to operate Cessna 150s, Cessna 172s, and both complex and high performance airplanes.

Mr. Gaither stated that during frequent flights with his son he would routinely describe his movements and explain how to fly the airplane. He added that his son and he flew the accident airplane once together.



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Note: The following interviews were document by the NTSB Investigator –In-Charge (IIC).

Interview Summary

Jen Cairy
Witness to Accident

Interview date/time: August 15, 2014; 1135 EDT
Atlantic Aviation

Interviewer was Stein.

Ms. Cairy worked for Atlantic Aviation and FBO located on the airport at LRO. She was sitting in the fuel truck in front of a Mooney, N5811Q, on the ramp just north of the FBO. She was facing the runway when she saw N66241 started its takeoff roll. She said the airplane lifted off just passed midfield and immediately looked unstable. She stated that it was rocking to the left and to the right. She felt that the airplane never got more than 400-500 feet off the ground. Once off the end of the runway she saw the airplane turn back to the left and it looked like the airplane was going to land on runway 17. At that time she saw the nose of the aircraft drop sharply and then level off for a split second before dropped again and rolled to the right. At that time the airplane impacted the ground. She immediately drove the truck up the taxiway and made her way out to the airplane on foot.

Interview Summary

Jen Cairy
Witness to Accident

Interview date/time: August 17, 2014; 2000 EDT
Atlantic Aviation

Interviewer was Stein

According to Ms. Cairy, she witnessed the student pilot inspect the fuel for contamination using a gats jar. The accident pilot then watched the elevator as the student pilot manipulated the flight controls.



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Nathan Rohrbaugh
Investigative Assistant
National Transportation Safety Board
Office of Aviation Safety - Eastern Region

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Interview Summary

Joe Bustos
Witness to Accident

Interview date/time: August 15, 2014; 1135 EDT
Atlantic Aviation

Note: The following interview was provided to the Investigator –In-Charge (IIC) by Nathan Rohrbaugh, NTSB, who documented the interviews.

Interviewers were Rohrbaugh, Nepomuceno, Gibson, and Yoos.

Mr. Bustos worked for Mount Pleasant Flight Training as a certificated flight instructor. He has been an instructor at LRO for about 8 years. He has done all his training and instructing at LRO.

He had just completed a flight and was heading back into the FBO. He saw the student and the instructor conduct a preflight on the accident airplane. Mr. Bustos went inside the FBO and did a quick debrief with his student. After a few minutes he went back outside to get his aircraft fueled for his flight the next day. He exited the FBO and turned to the left to walk towards hangar 30. At that time he heard the accident airplane start its takeoff roll. Mr. Bustos stopped at about midfield on the ramp to watch. He saw the airplane on the first third of the runway on the roll. He noticed that the airplane had "40 degrees of flaps down." Mr. Bustos's Cessna 172C model has a 40-degree flap setting so he is familiar with what it looks like. Shortly after

midfield the aircraft lifted off the ground. He said it climbed out of ground effect but it kept settling back down. He noted the aircraft being very unstable banking right and then banking left. He said it appeared they were trying to keep the nose low to build up airspeed. After passing over the end of the runway he saw the airplane bank to the left and continue a turn to a heading of approximately 260 degrees. At that time he saw the airplane's nose drop suddenly and bank sharply to the right. The airplane then impacted the ground. He said "it just fell straight down out of the sky."

After he saw the impact Mr. Bustos ran out through the bushes to get to the airplane. He made a note that when he got out to the airplane the flaps were all the way retracted.

Mr. Bustos said he heard the engine running throughout the event. He did not hear any "bangs or anything abnormal."

Interview Summary

Joe Bustos
Witness to Accident

Interview date/time: June 15, 2016; 1115 PT
Telephone Interview

Note: The following interview was document by the NTSB Investigator –In-Charge (IIC).

Interviewer was Stein.

According to Mr. Bustos, the airplane had no forward momentum when it entered a 90 degree nose down dive, corkscrewed slightly to the right and impacted the ground. The witness reported that the airplane's movements resembled an aerodynamic stall. As a result of this accident Mr. Bustos instructs all of his students to ensure their flight instructor has a valid certificate and to verify their flaps are set correctly in advance of their departure. Mr. Bustos stated that Coastal Aviation, Inc. now posts their certificates in frames for customers to see.