



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Timothy W. Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: April 11, 2015
Person Contacted: FAA Inspector CJ Land
NTSB Accident Number: ERA14LA199

Narrative:

FAA Inspector CJ Land contacted NTSB on April 18, 2014, at 0843 EDT. He called from [REDACTED]. He provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED].

He indicated the pilot was still in the hospital and was in critical condition. He sustained broken ribs, and a concussion. He was airlifted to Wake Medical, in Raleigh, North Carolina. The pilot is a B777 captain for AA.

He confirmed the accident occurred at 1540 EDT, and reported witnesses observed the accident sequence. He also indicated that he interviewed the witnesses. The glider was equipped with a GPS receiver, that was removed before FAA arrival.

The glider was towed aloft between 1500 and 1515, and there was a clean release at 2,000 feet in lift. The glider returned, and was on the downwind leg for runway 22. The glider crashed north of the airport, and by his estimation was in a 30 to 40 degree nose-low attitude. Both wing tips were damaged on impact, and the wheel was down, and the air brakes were retracted. The accident site was located at 35 degrees 56 minutes 05 seconds North latitude and 078 degrees 14 minutes 32 seconds West longitude. He inspected the wreckage but noted the wing was separated. The rudder had damage to the lower right area, and elevator and aileron control continuity was confirmed. The 4-point harness was cut.

He indicated there was no video of the accident sequence.

Frank Swett was the tow pilot, and can be reached at [REDACTED].

The digest was reviewed with him during the phone call and he agreed with the content.



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Mr. Frank Swett was contacted on April 18, 2014, at 0916 EDT. He was called to [REDACTED]. He provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED].

He indicated there is no known video of the accident. The GPS that was on-board the glider is owned by NC Soaring Association, with an address of [REDACTED], Zebulon, NC [REDACTED]. The glider was equipped with an internal radio plus a backup radio. The pilot who flew the glider previously reported no issues. He indicated that 2 pins hold the wings together, and brackets to the aircraft, and the air brakes and ailerons are controlled by push/pull tubes.

The accident pilot was the tow pilot for the day, but he asked Frank to tow him aloft because the soaring conditions were good. He indicated it was a "gusty/turbulent day." Two pilots who flew earlier reported a rotor near the north end of the runway. Before the flight, a flight control pressure check which takes 2 people was performed, no discrepancies were reported. After towing him aloft, a short time later he announced that he was inbound for landing. Mr. Swett asked him if he needed another tow aloft and he said yes. The pilot made an abbreviated pattern from the north close-in, and one witness (Tom Holmes) noted the air brakes were retracted, and another witness (Bill King) noted the glider was low. The last conversation with the accident pilot was no more than 5-10 minutes before the crash, and he sounded fine. A row of trees are located between the accident site and the runway, and the last time he saw the glider was on the downwind leg where it was low.

He indicated he was the 2nd person to approach the pilot at the scene, and was on-scene within 3 to 5 minutes, plus 2 other people also responded immediately. A retired nurse at the house adjacent to the accident site was the 1st person on-scene and called 911 to report the accident. He relayed there was a great response by the first responders. The pilot was unconscious, and the 4-point harness he was wearing was cut. He asked first responders what had happened.

With respect to the accident site, he reported the glider impacted nose low, and then the left wing. The glider rotated 90 degrees, then hit the right wing. The wing separated from the mounts in the fuselage. The wing pins were in place, and the canopy was shattered. The wing was moved to the right. The right rudder was jammed postaccident.

He indicated the accident pilot is a senior B777 captain, and was also a Navy pilot, and very experienced. He indicated he is very meticulous, and follows procedures.

He indicated that he has the NTSB Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident/Incident Report (6120 Form), but I advised him to hold off on completing until the pilot had recovered. He indicated that the pilot had sustained cracked vertebrae, a skull fracture in the sinus area, and his left fibula was broken.

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Mr. Frank Swett contacted NTSB on April 18, 2014, at 1053 EDT. He called from [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

He indicated that he and Matt Pinkerton (neither is an A & P mechanic) inspected the glider today, and the rudder cables are still connected. With respect to the aileron, the controls are push/pull rod. Because the wing separated on impact, the aileron flight control continuity from the "cone" and both are OK. They went to the fuselage and checked the roller and the stick moved OK, it moved in the appropriate direction. Elevator flight control continuity was confirmed. He further indicated, "All controls worked as they should", and there was no evidence of preimpact failure or malfunction of the flight controls for roll, pitch, yaw, and air brakes.

He indicated the air brakes are controlled from the cockpit by a lever, and the control inside the cockpit worked as it should.

He called again the same day at 1108 EDT, from the same phone number, and advised that he checked the cockpit air brake control, and the handle moves the linkage and vs. versa, but he can't get full travel because of impact damage. He checked the air brake handle and there is no way to detect the handle position at impact.

The digest was reviewed with him during the phone call and he agreed with the content.