



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

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Eastern Region

Date: July 28, 2015
Person Contacted: Leon D. Cole
NTSB Accident Number: ERA14LA329

Narrative:

Mr. Leon D. Cole was contacted by phone on October 1, 2014, at 1219 EDT. He was called at [REDACTED] He provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED]

He indicated he is an airframe and powerplant mechanic with inspection authorization and his certificate number is [REDACTED] He also indicated he is a pilot.

During the last annual inspection, the pilot squawked the autopilot. He did a test of it in accordance with the manufacturer procedures and heard a lot of noise from the autopilot computer (ADI). He called Tru-Trak who agreed that it needed to be upgraded. It was removed, and sent to the manufacturer for repairs. He reported waiting 2 weeks for it to be returned, and once they got it back, during subsequent ground based testing noted the roll servo was "acting lazy", felt sluggish, and it "wasn't proper." He had a servo but it was a letter designation different. Because of this he talked with Tru-Trak, and they agreed the servo was usable in the airplane. The roll servo was removed, and a servo that was in a box from Tru-Trak was installed as a loaner. He also checked the autopilot "thoroughly on the ground" which included engaging of the autopilot and moving the control stick to override the autopilot; no issues were noted. Following the annual inspection he flew the airplane himself twice. One flight lasted .4 hour and the second flight lasted .8 hour. During both flights he activated the autopilot and there were no issues. He indicated the loaner roll servo worked fine in the air. The work to the autopilot including testing was performed using the Tru-Trak installation manual. He indicated that Mr. Schnabel kept a plastic tote with manuals including Tru-Trak checklist, and if I check I should find his notes on yellow legal paper. During the inspection process the airplane remained in the hangar.

He reported the pitch servo is installed beneath the pilot's seat, and noted there are 2 pins on the forward portion of the seat that are spring loaded that hold the seat in place.

Following the annual inspection, the airplane was fueled with 100 low lead, and he noted that after fueling Mr. Schnabel did not check the fuel tanks for contaminants. Mr. Schnabel flew the airplane from Bradford, PA, to Buffalo.

He was asked if there was any communication after the annual inspection between himself and Mr. Schnabel. He indicated that there was no call from Mr. Schnabel after flying the airplane to Buffalo. He checked his e-mails and his last e-mail from Mr. Schnabel was dated June 23, 2014, in which he indicated it was a beautiful day for flying, but at that time his airplane was not ready yet. He was also asked if he ever downloaded the Flydat but he indicated he was never able to figure that out.

He was also asked why the engine logbook entry did not include the removal and installation of the roll servo. He indicated that issue was related to timing. He was asked if he had a work order for the annual inspection, and he indicated he did not. He does have a copy of the logbook entry.

He indicated he thought of the pilot as a professional. He was asked if he knew whether the pilot would have a tendency to engage the autopilot on takeoff. He indicated that as far as he knew he would not, but he did indicate he would use it while airborne.

Postaccident the pilot's wife told him that her husband was unable to speak.

Since the accident he has been thinking about possible scenarios, and indicated he is concerned about the use of autogas from cans, and the possibility of water contamination. He also indicated that about 2 years ago during an annual inspection he noted fuel seepage, which was repaired.

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