



RECORD OF CORRESPONDENCE

Dennis J. Diaz
Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Office of Aviation Safety - Eastern Region

Person(s) Contacted: Ken Haenlein – Friend of Accident Pilot
NTSB Case Number: ERA15LA231

In telephone conversation, Mr. Haenlein recalled the following:

The accident pilots had been experiencing problems with the airplane's alternator noting that it would drop offline. Tom Maliceck was going to examine it. The pilots planned to charge the airplane's battery over the previous night, and use a handheld radio during the accident flight, and also planned to leave the landing gear down.

On the day of the accident, they stated that after starting the engine, the alternator was ok. Mr. Haenlein was not sure if the pilots tried to use it during the accident flight. Mr. Haenlein flew in a separate airplane from the accident airplane and departed after the accident pilots. He reached the destination airport first and told the accident pilots that the automated weather reporting system was calling for 7 statute miles visibility, with scattered clouds at 400 feet, an overcast ceiling at 9,000 feet, and calm winds. He described that the weather conditions were "VFR" but there was a haze layer over the runway 22 end. He maneuvered his airplane so that the accident airplane could land first. The accident airplane initially entered the traffic pattern on a downwind leg for landing on runway 22, but upon noting the haze to the north, the accident pilots announced that they would transition over top of the airport to a left downwind for landing on runway 4.

He next saw the accident airplane on a left downwind to base for runway 4, flying at about 700 to 800 feet. He further described that the airplane appeared to be too close to the runway and may have even been flying directly above it. While the accident airplane was in the turn from the base to the final leg of the traffic pattern, he saw it suddenly pitch nose up, then in to a 30-degree nose down attitude heading toward the trees. He further described that while the airplane was in the turn from base to final, the turn was "too tight," and he thought that the airplane had entered an accelerated stall.

He was not sure if the airplane crashed or not and did not observe the impact, but when he did not receive a reply to his inquiries as to their position, assumed that the airplane had crashed. He then landed his own airplane, contacted emergency services, and proceeded to the accident site in order to render assistance. He later saw that the airplane had clipped a tree about 30 feet south of where it eventually came to rest. When he approached the wreckage shortly after the accident, he heard the commercial pilot remark that the private pilot had, "stalled the airplane."