



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Timothy W. Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: May 11, 2016
Person Contacted: Michael Williams
NTSB Accident Number: ERA16LA179

Narrative:

Mr. Williams was contacted by phone on May 11, 2016, at 1142 EDT. He was called at [REDACTED]. He provided a cell phone number of [REDACTED] and an e-mail address of [REDACTED].

At the beginning of the phone call he was advised that the NTSB is a federal agency mandated by Congress to investigate aircraft accidents, and NTSB has no authority to take any action against any individual. He was also informed that any person NTSB talks with has the right to representation; he agreed to the interview without representation.

He provided a home address of [REDACTED] Spencer, VA [REDACTED]. He indicated that he is a private pilot and has about 300 hours total flight time, although he has not flown in years. He has flown out of the airstrip numerous times and reported he no longer owns an airplane. He does know the pilot and has talked with him several times, but his cousin (Jimmy P. Williams) who owns the airstrip (Moorefield's Airstrip identified as VA27) is more familiar with the pilot. Because the airplane is based at the airstrip where it crashed, he is familiar with the sound of the engine. The contact numbers for his cousin are home [REDACTED] and cellular [REDACTED].

He indicated on the date and time of the accident, he was outside in his front yard spraying weed killer; he went onto Google Earth and plotted his position at that time as 36.562657 degrees North latitude and 080.1322717 degrees West longitude. That location when plotted was located about 1,279 feet and 102 degrees from the approach end of runway 19. He indicated that just before the accident he looked towards the airstrip and noted a dark cloud, and because of the weather he was concerned about diluting the chemical he was spraying. He estimated the ceiling was between 3,000 and 4,000 feet, and the wind was from the west gusting between 10 and 15 knots. He heard the airplane with engine power, then heard power reduced, followed by an

increase in engine power. He described the sound as smooth and the engine, “sounded like it was running fine.” He then heard the propeller contact trees similar to a bush hog hitting 4 inch saplings. It then became quiet. He got into his car and drove about ½ mile north on Moorefield Store Road looking for the wreckage because he thought the airplane was on final approach, and after not finding it he drove to his cousins house located on the south end of the airstrip. They spotted the wreckage near a house at the approach end of runway 19, and when they arrived the pilot was already out of the airplane beside the wing. He asked the pilot if he was hurt and he said mostly to his leg. The pilot indicated to him that the, “wind turned him sideways and he was trying to miss the house.” He (Mr. Williams) indicated it started raining hard after first responders arrived, but the rain did not last long. He confirmed that he did not see the airplane during the flight, he only heard it.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on May 11, 2016, at 1415 EDT. He replied the same day at 1458 EDT with, “Received e-mail and everything seems correct.”



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Timothy W. Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: June 9, 2016
Person Contacted: Mr. Hassel H. Handy
NTSB Accident Number: ERA16LA179

Narrative:

Mr. Handy was contacted by phone on June 8, 2016, at 0907 EDT. He was called at [REDACTED]. He provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED].

At the beginning of the phone call he was advised that the NTSB is a federal agency mandated by Congress to investigate aircraft accidents, and NTSB has no authority to take any action against any individual. He was also informed that any person NTSB talks with has the right to representation; he agreed to the interview without representation.

He indicated that he was currently at the Rehab facility and has been there for about 4 weeks. He was planning to be released later today. He was asked if he currently was medicated and he indicated he was. He is given Percocet twice a day for pain, and his last dose was at 0700 EDT today. He indicated that on the accident date, he was taking Xanax and ICAPS Eye Vitamin & Mineral Supplement, neither of which resulted in impairment of his capacity as a pilot.

With respect to the accident flight, he departed from the Person County Airport (KTDF), Roxboro, North Carolina, which he attended as part of a fly-in. He was returning to Moorefield's Airstrip (VA27), Critz, Virginia, when the accident occurred. He was flying from the left seat, and was wearing the lapbelt but reported the airplane was not equipped with shoulder harnesses. He indicated that during the approach to the runway, the wind was at 7 to 8 mph and was nearly a headwind but also a slight right crosswind component. He was lined up on the runway during final approach and may have been starting to flare at about 10 to 15 feet above ground level, when the, "wind kicked me 90 degrees so fast." The next thing he knew he was too low and slow, and impacted the top of pine saplings. He confirmed he was not sure if he was during the flare. He estimated the flight time was about 45 to 50 minutes, and was longer than the typical 30 minute flight because of the headwind.

With additional questions, he indicated he was in the process of being released from the Rehab facility and asked me to call him at his home number later today at 1300 EDT. Before concluding the call he was asked if there was anything mechanically wrong with the airplane that caused the accident and he indicated there was nothing wrong with the aircraft adding, "the aircraft was fine."

Mr. Handy was contacted by phone the same day at 1300 EDT. He was called at his home phone number of [REDACTED]

At the beginning of the phone call he was again advised that any person NTSB talks with has the right to representation; he again agreed to the interview without representation.

He indicated that his date of birth is [REDACTED] and his address is [REDACTED] Critz, VA. He was asked if he had his pilot certificate with him and indicated he was not sure where it was at this time. He confirmed he holds a private pilot certificate with airplane single engine land rating issued April 1972, providing the day as the 4th (which agrees with FAA records). He confirmed the airplane was based at VA27, and the distance between the departure and accident locations is about 60 miles. He did not have a flight plan on file, and reported the weather was clear. He did watch TV for weather, but did not obtain a formal weather briefing.

He indicated the airplane did not have flaps installed nor an electrical system, but he did have a portable GPS receiver to avoid certain airspace, and VHF radio.

With respect to VA27, he indicated that over the past 4 years he has operated the accident airplane from it. He also previously operated 3 other aircraft over several years from it. He indicated that it is equipped with a windsock. Based on his experience approaching the same runway with any wind you would typically get a downdraft when over the creek.

Concerning the accident flight, he departed KTFD at 1330, and after arrival over VA27 observed the windsock that indicated landing on runway 19. He entered the downwind leg for runway 19, turned base and then final flying at 60 mph. He slowed approaching the runway, and about the time when getting ready to flare while in a right wing low attitude with left rudder input for the crosswind from the right, the airplane kicked to the left. He added some power but not full power because of the way the airplane was pointing with tall trees ahead; the engine responded. He indicated that after impacting the top of the tree, the airplane likely stalled. He estimated the accident occurred between 1400 and 1430. About 10 minutes after the crash with fire rescue on-scene, he noted it began to rain heavy. He was asked if the airplane stalled when it first veered to the left and he indicated it had not, he was still above the stall speed at that time. He indicated that there was a thunderstorm nearby and indicated the wind was, "pretty squirrely at the end", and thought it might be caused by a microburst from a small thunderstorm located 5 to 6 miles away. He confirmed the stall speed is between 40-45 mph. The airplane was insured, and the insurance adjuster is Mr. Harder.

His injuries include [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and he sustained a [REDACTED]. The [REDACTED] required [REDACTED] and was the reason for the extended rehabilitation stay.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on June 8, 2016, about 1517 EDT. He responded the same day at 2106 EDT, with, "I have received the e-mail and 1 attachment and reviewed the attachment and do not note any corrections. Regards, Hassel H. Handy"