



MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Air Safety Investigator- Aaron McCarter
National Transportation Safety Board
Office of Aviation Safety - Eastern Region

Date: July 7, 2017
Person Contacted: Theodore Westlake (Pilot)
NTSB Accident Number: ERA17CA213

Narrative:

It was a mail haul flight to the island. The weather was clear, and winds were light. The temperature dewpoint spread was high. The flight was uneventful up until the landing.

The approach appeared to be normal until landing. The airplane landed a little hard on the gravel runway and bounced high.

As the airplane bounced, he realized the bounce was too high and the remaining runway at that point was too short to salvage the landing, so he elected to go around instead of trying to force a landing either on the runway or off to the side.

The pilot used the balked landing procedure, which includes 20 degrees of flaps and full power. The airplane drifted to the left and towards the trees that border the runway. The engine sounded normal.

The pilot thought he could possibly make it, but did not want to take the chance of stalling by trying to force the airplane over the trees which were between 75 and 100 feet tall.

When the belly or tail of the airplane started hitting the bottom of the trees; he's not sure what part of the airplane struck first, he instinctively lowered the nose to reduce the possibility of a fully developed stall. He reduced the power and settled into the trees. The nose dropped sharply, and the airplane descended into the trees and struck the ground in a nose low position, but it remained upright, and the cabin was intact.

He has flown this route many, many times, and there was nothing unusual about the amount of mail, weight or performance of the aircraft.