



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Eastern Region – Ashburn, Virginia

Record of Conversation

Who: Dr. Manfred Rieder

When: August 28, 2018

Re: ERA18FA232

Mr. Rieder contacted the NTSB via telephone on August 28, 2018, regarding his friend Mark Biron, who was killed in an airplane accident on August 25, 2018, in Island Pond, VT.

Mr. Rieder had been a pilot for 58 years but no longer flew due to health reasons. He stated that he flew with Mark Biron almost every Sunday and flew in the local area. He described Mr. Biron as being "very thorough" and always completed a preflight inspection. During the inspection, he would always check the fuel for water "every time."

Mr. Rieder flew with Mr. Biron the weekend before the accident. There were no mechanical issues with the airplane. He estimated they landed with about 18 gallons (9 gallons per each wing fuel tank) and that Mr. Biron most likely departed on the accident flight with the same amount of fuel as when they landed. There was an auxiliary fuel tank behind the front seats, but he was not sure if any fuel was in that tank. Mr. Rieder said Mr. Biron was practicing for an upcoming biennial flight review scheduled the following week.

Mr. Rieder said that Mr. Biron was a conscientious pilot, but there was one area of concern that always bothered him when they flew together. Mr. Rieder said Mr. Biron tended to turn from the downwind leg onto the base leg of the traffic pattern "quite steep" (about 40° bank) and slow (62-63 knots). The airplane was not equipped with a stall horn or indicator. Mr. Rieder shared his concern with Mr. Biron, but he did not seem to be concerned with stalling the airplane.

Mr. Rieder also said Mr. Biron would normally turn onto the base leg early and land about 800 ft from the approach end of the runway, which allowed him to make a full stop right in front of his hangar.

Mr. Rieder said that when he went to the accident site, he knew Mr. Biron had stalled and spun low to the ground and was unable to recover.

Mr. Rieder said he told the pilot's wife what he thought had caused the accident and she advised him to call the NTSB. Mr. Rieder also mentioned that he had terminal cancer and that he wanted to speak to the NTSB before he died.

Leah D. Read, Sr. ASI