



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Timothy W. Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: June 20, 2019
Person Contacted: Allan Crabbe
NTSB Accident Number: ERA18LA039

Narrative:

FAA inspector Allan Crabbe was contacted by phone on December 4, 2017, at 1151 EST, and left a voice mail message. He returned the call the same day at 1207 EST, from [REDACTED]. He provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED] and a work phone of [REDACTED].

He provided the following timeline for December 2, 2017 (Saturday) –

About midday, the gyroplane (N481ZK) was seen at the Eagles Ridge Airport (MS9), Hernando, MS, where it was based.

Between 1630 and 1700 CST, a hunter was walking out of the woods and saw a brush fire which he reported. When the fire department responded to extinguish the fire, they spotted the wreckage. Inspector Crabbe reported that the fire was extinguished at night.

At an unknown time after learning of finding of the wreckage, the manager of MS9 responded to the airport and noted the hangar door open and the pilot's car at MS9.

Inspector Crabbe gave permission to remove the bodies.

Inspector Crabbe reported there were no known witnesses who saw the gyroplane depart. He also reported the experimental, amateur-built gyroplane was a two-place, side by side aircraft equipped with dual controls. He provided details about the owner, pilot-rated passenger, and law enforcement. He could not tell who was seated where. He provided 1 FAA toxicology box to the coroner/medical examiner and will provide a second toxicology box to the crime lab.

He indicated that he was on-scene on December 3, 2017 (Sunday) to inspect the wreckage and accident site. The accident site was located about ½ mile away from the departure airstrip. It crashed in a wooded area, and the surrounding area was fire damaged.

The gyroplane was resting on its right side. One blade of the main rotor was fractured about 3 ft outboard of the tip due to tree contact; the separated tip was found. Based on his examination of the accident site, the gyroplane descended at a 75° angle. The main rotor did not show signs of energy/inertia based on the blade bending. All propeller blades were sheared consistent with the engine developing power at impact. He could not confirm continuity for cyclic and collective due to the heat damage, but did confirm flight control cable continuity for yaw. He did find one piece of propeller blade 25 feet away from the wreckage. The gyroplane was equipped with a liquid cooled Subaru engine, and all belts were intact. The teeth on all pulleys were good. He did locate a multi-function display but reported it was extensively fire damaged. There was no slot for a SD card.

After leaving the scene he inspected the hangar where the gyroplane was kept and did not find any maintenance records.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on June 20, 2019. He replied the same day at 1731 EDT with, "Tim, Hello, All looks accurate to me...."



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Timothy W. Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: June 19, 2019
Person Contacted: Ruben Correa
NTSB Accident Number: ERA18LA039

Narrative:

Mr. Ruben Correa was contacted by phone on December 5, 2017, at 1520 EST. He was called at [REDACTED] He provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED]

He was contacted in an effort to obtain his assistance in examining the engine. He indicated at the on-set of the call that he had not worked on the accident gyroplane before. He is an airframe and powerplant mechanic (A&P) and his certificate number is [REDACTED]

Some time ago, the pilot had told him he had about 100 hours in the accident gyroplane. He also told him about 3 weeks ago that he let his son (Richard House) fly the gyroplane, and his son said he was scared because of the landing/hovering technique he used.¹ Mr. Correa also indicated that he observed Wayne House takeoff to the west from Eagles Ridge Airport (MS9), and saw the gyroplane flying low nearly hitting trees. He brought this to the pilot's attention and suggested he takeoff to the east to avoid trees. The owner had a problem with the alternator, which was corrected. The owner and his son as part of that process installed an annunciator (light) in the cockpit to alert when the alternator had failed.

On the day of the accident, Mr. Correa was not at the airport. Although he was not present at the airport, he surmised that the accident occurred on a return to the airport. He indicated that the pilot would typically depart to the east, remain in the traffic pattern and do 1 or 2 touch-and-go landings. He indicated that the pilot would also fly around his property in Tate County.

¹ According to Legacy.com, Richard House was a pilot for a major U.S. airline. FAA records indicated he did not hold a rotorcraft gyroplane rating.

The accident pilot (Wayne House) would not rely on the fuel quantity indicator, which Mr. Correa thought worked, rather, he would check the fuel level in the fuel tank with a stick. About 3 to 4 months ago, he (Mr. Correa) gave PRC® sealant to Wayne House (one of the occupants and owner of the gyroplane) to fix a fuel tank leak. The previous owner of the gyroplane had used room temperature vulcanization (RTV) sealant to seal regular nut plates for the fuel tank access panel securing screws, rather than using a capped/self sealing nut plates.

He reported that Wayne House had put fuel in the tank but tried not to fill it up. Ruben had visually inspected the tank and saw RTV around the fuel tank access panel.

The day before the accident, the owner of the gyroplane told him he smelled fuel while in the cabin. Ruben told him to check the fuel tank for leaks, to which the owner told him there were none. Ruben asked him about a fuel tank vent, and the owner reported he did not know if it had a fuel tank vent.

Postaccident, he noticed the cabin doors were off the gyroplane and in his hangar.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on June 19, 2019. Mr. Correa was contacted by phone on June 26, 2019, at 0939 EDT. He provided comments that were incorporated into the narrative. The corrected digest was e-mailed to him on June 26, 2019. He replied the same day at 1018 EDT with, "Hi Tim, I think that is correct. If you need any help let me know."



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Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: June 20, 2019
Person Contacted: Allan Crabbe
NTSB Accident Number: ERA18LA039

Narrative:

FAA inspector Allan Crabbe contacted NTSB by phone on May 1, 2018, at 1337 EDT. He called from [REDACTED]

He had examined the engine and noted the valve train was intact and there was good continuity with no scoring of the cylinder walls. There was no valve slap, and the rollers and lifters were good. He noted fire on the forward portion of the engine, but there was no indication of an in-flight fire. The ignition system was destroyed by fire, and the throttle body injection was impact damaged and the butterfly was stuck near the closed position. The spark plugs color, and wear looked normal. The oil pump was normal and the oil filter was cut open and there was no signs of metal. There was no sign of lubrication distress.

He also reported 1 piston dome exhibited slight scoring. The piston sleeves were normal and did not exhibit any scoring. Both head gaskets were normal. They did not split the engine crankcase.

One main rotor blade was bent up and 1 was bent down.

He agreed that the wreckage could be released.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on June 20, 2019. He replied the same day with comments that were incorporated into the narrative. The corrected digest was e-mailed to him on June 24, 2019.