



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Timothy W. Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: April 5, 2018
Person Contacted: Antonius Ketelaars
NTSB Accident Number: ERA18LA117

Narrative:

He was contacted by phone on April 3, 2018, at 1003 EDT. He was called at [REDACTED] He provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED]

At the beginning of the call he advised he was shopping. He advised he would call back in 1 hour. He returned the call the same day at 1047 EDT from the same phone number.

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 the purpose of an NTSB investigation is for safety only, and any person NTSB talks with has the right to representation; he agreed to the interview without representation.

He provided a home address of [REDACTED] Burlington, Ontario, Canada [REDACTED] He indicated that he has a private pilot certificate with ASEL, ASES, AMEL, and Helicopter ratings. He also has a Group 3 instrument rating. For helicopters he is rated in the Robinson R22 and R44. He has a 3rd class medical certificate with a limitation for, "glasses must be worn" issued May 24, 2016, valid until May 31, 2018. His pilot certificate number is [REDACTED] He is English language proficient.

The airplane is owned by Ketelaars Holdings, Ltd., at the same address. It is a retractable, 4-place airplane, registration C-GSQQ. It was an amateur-built airplane. He did not build it, but has owned it for about 8 years. His airplane did not have hull insurance; he only had liability insurance. It is not equipped with a ballistic parachute.

With respect to the accident, he reported that he was the pilot-in-command, and was seated in the left seat. He was wearing a three-place restraint that was snug. His brother, Bill Ketelaars (non-

pilot) was in the right front seat and was also wearing a three-place restraint. A passenger, Vern Vowles, was in the left rear seat and was wearing the two-place restraint. He sustained a bump on his head. All 3 are Canadian citizens. There were no injury to himself or his brother.

In advance of the flight from Buckingham Field Airport (FL59), Fort Myers, Florida, to Sebring Regional Airport (SEF), Sebring, Florida, he did obtain a preflight weather briefing on-line with Foreflight, and obtained NOTAMS. He did not file a flight plan.

He departed FL59 about 0800, and arrived at SEF about 0830. He executed a GPS approach to runway 01, and landed uneventfully. He rolled on the runway to the end, then turned left onto taxiway and stopped. He performed the taxi checks, cleaned up the airplane, and noticed a Boeing 737 that was facing south on a taxiway that paralleled the runway. That airplane was south of the taxiway, and he thought it was parked. Neither he or his brother recall seeing any people on the ground around the B737. He went on to say that he usually sees large airplanes parked on the airport.

He noticed that the left engine cowling of the B737 was missing, but he could not perceive either engine was running. He taxied west bound on the taxiway (later identified as A4), and when he behind the 737 (about 200-300 ft), with no aileron control input applied, the left wing was raised and the right wing contacted the taxiway suddenly. The airplane cartwheeled and came to rest upright. The doors were opened and all occupants exited the airplane. After the event people responded to their airplane pretty quickly. He looked towards the B737 and noticed 3-4 people standing there. He indicated the airplane vibrated and went off the taxiway.

He noticed when he had landed a gyroplane in the circuit, and a Vans RV12 was behind them. He was monitoring the common traffic advisory frequency (CTAF) of 122.7 MHz, but did not hear any communications from the B737. He went on to say that he knows his radio was working because other aircraft in the pattern acknowledged his transmissions during his approach and landing. When asked if he made an announcement that he was taxiing when off the runway, he could not recall, but he stated that he normally would make a transmission, "sebring traffic end of runway 01, taxi to main terminal." He was asked if anybody in his airplane was video recording the event and he said no.

He flies into SEF about once a week.

He indicated that the damage to his airplane consisted of the propeller, the empennage was cracked, and both wings were damaged at the wing root due to up and down flexing. He also indicated that the left main landing gear was damaged during recovery.

He was asked if his brother had made a written statement. He advised he had not. He was asked to have his brother prepare a written statement for NTSB. He was also asked to have the left rear seat occupant prepare a written statement. He did prepare a written statement that he provided to the insurance adjuster of the maintenance facility "Extreme". The insurance adjuster is Scott Harris whose phone is [REDACTED]

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on April 5, 2018. He replied the same day at 1356 EDT, with, "Hi Tim That looks good Tony"



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Timothy W. Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: April 6, 2018
Person Contacted: Mike Willingham
NTSB Accident Number: ERA18LA117

Narrative:

Mr. Willingham who is the Executive Director of Sebring Regional Airport (SEF), Sebring, Florida, was contacted by phone on April 3, 2018, at 1324 EDT, and left message. He returned the call the same day at 1322 EDT, from [REDACTED] He provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED]

He indicated that a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) inspector was at KSEF on Good Friday, or March 30th. The inspector did not see either airplane in the positions they were in when the accident occurred. He indicated that he has a report prepared by airport personnel and will provide. Volo was on site, and there were "lots of people in the cockpit." He confirmed that there is no blast fence at SEF, but because of the accident they are beginning the process to install one.

He confirmed the Lancair was on taxiway A4 when the accident occurred.

He was asked whether there are any written procedures that the airport had in place at the time of the accident with tenants regarding maintenance test runs. He indicated that at that time, there was no written procedures, but they did have an unwritten policy requiring the maintenance provider (Volo Aviation) to verbally contact him directly to advise of proposed engine runs. He reported that no-one called him in advance to advise of the proposed engine run. Post accident, they have incorporated a requirement in their standard operating procedures (SOP) for a maintenance provider to provide written documentation in advance of proposed engine runs, and also requiring a ground observer.

He provided the following contact for Volo Aviation:

President Brian Ciambra

Phone: [REDACTED]

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on April 6, 2018. He replied on April 4, 2019, at 0826 EDT with comments that were incorporated into the narrative. The corrected digest was e-mailed to him the same day.



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Timothy W. Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: April 6, 2018
Person Contacted: Mike Willingham
NTSB Accident Number: ERA18LA117

Narrative:

Mr. Willingham who is the Executive Director of Sebring Regional Airport (SEF), Sebring, Florida, contacted NTSB by phone on April 6, 2018, at 1144 EDT. He called from [REDACTED]

He indicated that the B737 flew into KSEF about 12-18 months ago, and while flying in communicated on the KSEF CTAF.

With respect to engine run spots, they have run at the same spot before in the early morning or late afternoon.

On the accident date, a group of airplanes were flying into KSEF for breakfast. He was driving in to work when the accident occurred and arrived at KSEF about 2 to 3 minutes after the accident.

During the engine runs, Volo personnel monitor the KSEF CTAF.

KSEF is owned by the Sebring Airport Authority, and he is the Executive Director. They had just hired an Airport Manager about 60 days earlier.

Mr. Willingham indicated that he uses a handheld VHF transceiver, and he monitors the KSEF CTAF. He was asked if it was recorded and advised he would check and let me know. At the time of the engine run, the only SEF personnel that was present was the maintenance person who was inside the building. Mr. Willingham was asked if KSEF had any security video that captured the event. He advised that he has asked and would get back with NTSB. He confirmed there was no damage to airport property as a result of the engine run.

He was advised that I had reviewed the LiveATC.net audio for KSEF about the time of the accident and asked if he knew who had made the radio call advising the Lancair that jets running. He indicated that Chris Lord was the person who was in the air and made the radio call.

Action Items:

1. Mr. Willingham will check if KSEF CTAF is recorded and whether there is any video¹
2. He will provide airport diagram annotated where the B737 was parked.²
3. He will provide the contact for Chris Lord³

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on April 4, 2019. He did not reply.

¹ Mr. Willingham advised by e-mail on 4/6/2018 that there was no video that captured the accident.

² Mr. Willingham provide an annotated Diagram on 4/6/2018, and then a revise diagram on 4/7/2018

³ Mr. Willingham provided the contact for Chris Lord the same day at 1214 EDT



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Timothy W. Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: April 6, 2018
Person Contacted: Christopher Lord
NTSB Accident Number: ERA18LA117

Narrative:

Mr. Christopher Lord was contacted by phone on April 6, 2018, at 1253 EDT. He was called at [REDACTED] and left a voice mail message. He returned the call the same day at 1305 EDT from the same phone number. 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 the purpose of an NTSB investigation is for safety only, and any person NTSB talks with has the right to representation; he agreed to the interview without representation.

The corrected interview summary and annotated diagrams are an attachment to this Record of Conversation.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on April 6, 2018. He replied on April 8, 2018, at 0720 EDT with corrections to the narrative and with annotated diagrams,

He indicated that he is based at Sebring Regional Airport (KSEF), Sebring, Florida. He has been there about 1 year, and typically flies about 20 hours a week. He owns a gyroplane, assembles ELA gyroplanes, and maintains gyroplanes, and also trains gyroplane pilots. He is a Designated Pilot Examiner (DPE) for gyroplanes, and has been contracted to train FAA operations inspectors in gyroplanes. Because there are retired persons flying in and out of KSEF, he maintains keen vigilance.

On the date and time of the accident, he was giving instruction in a two-place gyroplane, N521EA, and had been flying at KSEF from runway 01. While in the airport traffic pattern, he was making radio calls saying “rotorcraft gyroplane.” He recalled hearing the Lancair pilot announce on the KSEF common traffic advisory frequency (CTAF) of 122.7 MHz when the Lancair flight was 20 and 10 miles away from KSEF. He reported that he thought a friend of the pilot had landed on runway 32.

Because he is a gyroplane, he was on right traffic for runway 01. While he was on a right downwind for runway 01, he noticed the Lancair was on close final for runway 01. He turned base, then final, and flew a low approach over the runway noticing that the Lancair continued on the runway to the end. He told his student, “what the heck”, and then slowed to about 50 so as not to overtake the Lancair. He noticed that the Lancair turned off runway 01 at the end onto taxiway A4, and when the Lancair was just past the hold short line, he announced on the KSEF CTAF that the B737 engine was running, based on his observation that jet blast was pushing over the grass all the way to the trees. He also noticed there was a tug attached to the B737 and vehicles around it. The Lancair did not respond to his announcement. From his vantage point, there wasn’t enough room for the Lancair to pass, with him estimating that the clearance between the left wingtip of the Lancair and tail of the B737 to be about 5 to 10 ft.

When the Lancair was behind the B737, which he estimated the engine was running “wide open”, the Lancair’s left wing raised, the airplane pivoted (to the right) forward and caught the tail, then the tail raised, and he thought the airplane would nose over. The tail dropped onto the gear coming to rest upright. He asked on the CTAF if Jason (maintenance person) on ground if he needed any help. After that announcement he remained in the airport traffic pattern, and announced on the CTAF that there was congestion at the airport.

Postaccident he listened to LiveATC.net. On there he can be heard telling the Lancair about the jet engine running and asking Jason if he needed assistance.

He indicated that the spot where the B737 was running the engine is the usual area where the maintenance facility performs engine runs, but there is usually a notice on the automated terminal information service (ATIS) announcing the location. And in this instance though, he did not listen to it (we had previously flown that morning and taxied to the runway not checking the

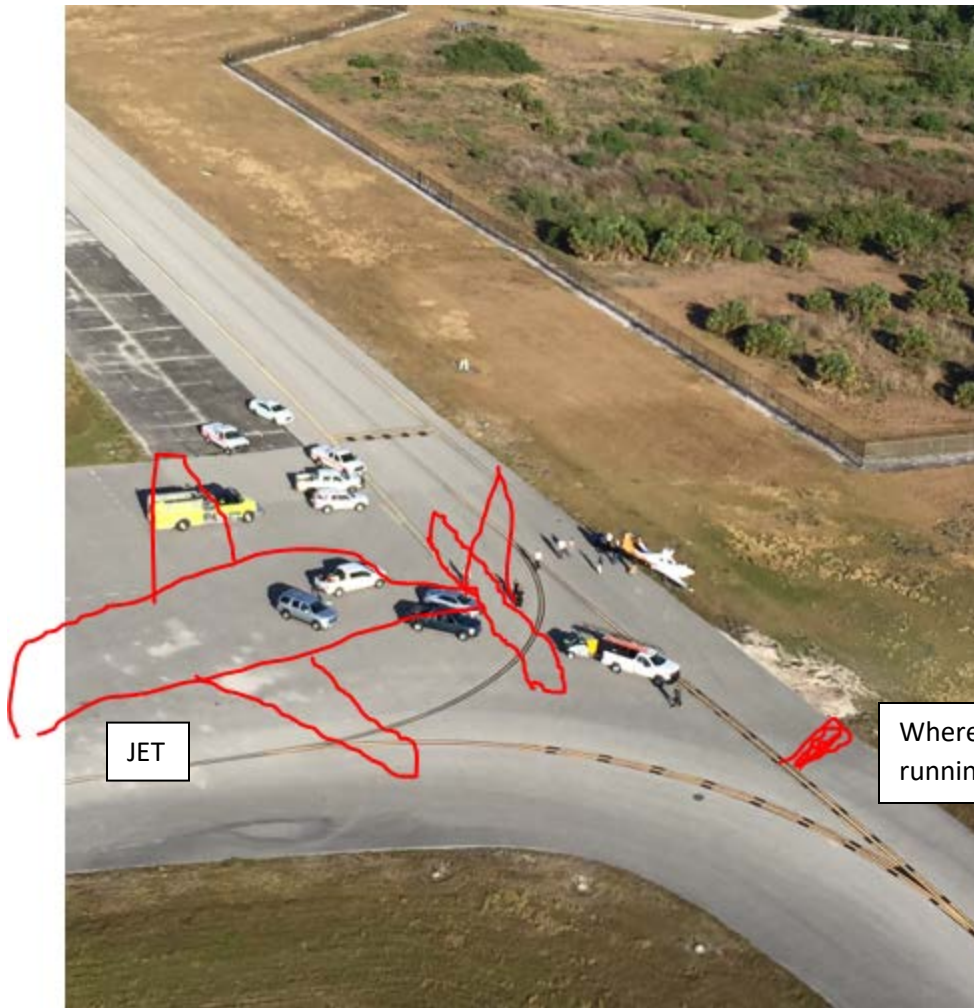
ATIS, only the wind sock to view changes). Jason of the airport maintenance facility is usually in a car at the airplane when engine runs are performed.

He was asked if he would annotate on an airport diagram his location and the location of the Lancair when he announced, "Lancair that jets running." He indicated that he would.

He was not recording their flight. He did take a picture afterwards, when the B737 was gone. He reported he did not hear the Lancair pilot announce that he was off the runway.







JET

Where I stated "Lancair that jet is running"



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Timothy W. Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: April 6, 2018
Person Contacted: Jason M. Ali and Mr. Zach Easton
NTSB Accident Number: ERA18LA117

Narrative:

Mr. Jason M. Ali was contacted by phone on April 9, 2018, at 1220 EDT. He was called at [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 the purpose of an NTSB investigation is for safety only, and any person NTSB talks with has the right to representation. He indicated that he will call me once he obtains clearance from the SEF Executive Director.

He called NTSB the same day at 1302 EDT. The call was made from [REDACTED]

He was again advised that the NTSB has no authority to take any action against any individual. He was also informed that the purpose of an NTSB investigation is for safety only, and any person NTSB talks with has the right to representation. He indicated that Mr. Zach Easton (SEF Airport Manager) who was present on the call, will be his representative. He provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED]

Jason indicated he was employed by Volo Aviation, and is the fixed base operator (FBO) general manager, which he has held for about 3 years. He does hold a commercial pilot certificate but is not an A&P mechanic. He prepared the diagram titled, "737 / Lancair Incident" which documented the locations of the B737 and Lancair ground path and resting position.

He indicated that the airport has 2 different approved engine run locations that were previously approved by Mike Willingham (KSEF Executive Director) and himself. A north spot (where the B737 was parked when the accident occurred), and a south spot (abandoned runway). He

indicated that there is a standard or “blanket” approval to use the north spot for engine runs, and the only thing required to use it would be a verbal approval from airport personnel.

Global Engine Maintenance (GEM) was the facility that works on the engines but at the present time they did not have anybody engine run qualified. Because of that, they subcontracted to Xtreme Aviation to perform the engine run.

He also indicated that Luis Pratts of Volo Aviation and Juan of Xtreme Aviation made the decision to use the north spot that day for the engine run. He believed that Terry Elders of SEF Airport was aware of the proposed engine run, and also gave approval to use the north spot for the proposed engine runs on March 28, 2018. There were no barricades in place for the engine run.

For the accident engine run, Luis and Juan communicated with each other. He indicated it is part of their standard operating procedure to conduct a safety briefing before the engine runs.

On the accident date about 0800 or before, the airplane was towed to the north spot by GEM personnel, and was escorted by Luis Pratts of Volo Aviation. The airplane was positioned with the tail partially over taxiway A4. The purpose of the engine run was for testing the left engine; however, the right engine was operated at the same time to the same power level as the left. In advance of the engine runs, the 3 employees of GEM and Mr. Pratts of Volo Aviation were on the ground acting as observers with direct communication capability with the cockpit. The ground observers were in vehicles, with Mr. Pratts in 1 vehicle and the 3 GEM employees in a separate vehicle. The employees of GEM shared 1 radio while Mr. Pratts also had 1 radio. They were all in contact with the cockpit using Channel 1. For the engine run, Juan of Xtreme Aviation was in the left seat and typically it was a GEM employee in the right seat; however, he was not sure who was in the right seat at the time of the accident. He also advised there were several people in the cockpit from various entities.

Jason said the engine run had already begun when he arrived to relieve Mr. Pratts. When he relieved Mr. Pratts, the briefing he received before taking over the morning of the 737 incident involved the path they used to come out to the run up area, why they were placed in that location, and the expected time of the runs completion. Luis figured they would be done between 09:30 and 10:00 at the latest if everything went as scheduled and no problems with the 737 engine being tested manifested. In addition to this, Luis also informed him of the problems that had been occurring in the traffic pattern earlier that morning. Specifically, multiple traffic conflicts had occurred between aircraft performing touch-and-go operations and the aircraft that were landing for breakfast on that morning. He was further informed that multiple disputes had occurred over the radio before he arrived. This briefing matched with a conversation he had with Terry Elders (works for Sebring Airport Authority), earlier that same morning. He advised me that the planes were “cutting each other off” multiple times in the traffic pattern and that some pilots were calling the touch and go plane out for its actions. He then asked if there was anything we could do. He told him that because Sebring Regional Airport was an uncontrolled airfield, we had no authority over what the pilots did in the traffic pattern.

He believed he took over between 0800 and 0805. Jason positioned his vehicle at the nose of the airplane, while the vehicle with the GEM employees was on the eastern edge of the taxiway and just south of the nose of the airplane. Jason also had a portable VHF transceiver with him which he used to monitor the SEF common traffic advisory frequency (CTAF) of 122.7 MHz. He indicated that the GEM employees did not have a portable VHF transceiver with them. On that day he recalled hearing a gyroplane and a Piper airplane in the airport traffic pattern. The last transmission from the Lancair that he heard was when the pilot broadcast on the SEF CTAF being on a 5 to 7 mile final.¹

With both engines stabilized at 85% power, which they had been at for about 5 to 10 minutes, or about 30 minutes into the engine run, the first time he saw the Lancair was when it turned off runway 01 at the end, and had crossed the hold short line, which was a surprise to him. When he saw the Lancair cross the hold short line, his very first communication attempt was with the Lancair on the Unicom Frequency of 122.7. I very quickly realized that my communication had been stepped on because when he released the transmit button on my handheld Unicom radio, the completion of another aircraft's transmission came across my speaker and continued to broadcast. At that time, he put his vehicle into drive and tried to get in front of the Lancair. Once the Lancair had encountered the jet blast, his first communication attempt with the 737 cockpit on Channel 1. He called "Code 128" and "shut down, shut down, shut down" on the Channel 1 radio. The "Code 128" broadcast is Volo Aviation's internal broadcast for an emergency and all employees to go to their emergency response positions. He indicated that Juan of Xtreme Aviation knew what that code meant. That communication was successful and the power down of the engines proceeded as quickly as could be safely done (it is my understanding that they cannot be immediately dropped to idle and shut off; please speak with a member of either Xtreme or Global Engine Maintenance to confirm my thoughts on this statement). He made sure the B737 was secured then went to the Lancair and attempted to render assistance. He was asked if he thought the GEM personnel saw the Lancair and he indicated he was not sure.

He was asked who was in charge of the engine run to determine a safe operation, and he advised Global Engine Maintenance.

He relayed that as part of his duties during an engine run, he monitors the SEF CTAF and if he identifies an airplane inbound to land on runways 19 or 14, he would make a radio call on the SEF CTAF advising to use caution due to the airplane with engines running.

With respect to the engine runs, he indicated that he would have thought it would have been visually obvious that the engines were running.

I require the following action items from him:

¹ NTSB review of KSEF Common Traffic Advisory Frequency (CTAF) recordings from LiveATC.net for the periods 1200 UTC to 1230 UTC revealed the Lancair pilot announced when the flight was 20 miles south, 10 miles south, 5 miles final for runway 01 GPS Approach, 2 miles final runway 01, 1 mile final runway 01, and short final runway 01. It could not be discerned if there were any transmission from aircraft on the ground. Local time requires subtraction of 4 hours from UTC time.

- 1) Contact for Juan
- 2) Right Seat Contact

Mr. Zach Easton of SEF was asked to clarify who was required to give approval for an engine run at the north pad, and also did Mr. Terry Elders give approval. He indicated that approval to use the north pad would come from SEF personnel and he did not know if Terry Elders had given permission. He was asked about any announcements on the CTAF pertaining to engine runs or Notices to Airman (NOTAMS). He indicated that an engine run would not have been announced as a NOTAM because the B737 was on a taxiway. He did indicate that in the past they would announce on the CTAF for aircraft that are landing on runways 14 or 19. Mr. Ali advised that a lot of aircraft were landing runway 01. An announcement on the CTAF was made by Mr. Pratts at the beginning of the exercise, and also by Mr. Ali when he relieved Mr. Pratts.²

Messrs. Ali or Easton indicated that if the pilot had announced he had landed runway 01 and was taxiing via A4, they would have been immediately prompted to make a radio call on the CTAF announcing the engine run.

Jason was asked after the fact if he discussed the circumstances leading up to the accident event with Juan. He advised that after the fact, everybody was focused on making sure the occupants in the Lancair were ok. When Juan exited the aircraft, the first thing he asked was to make sure the occupants on-board the Lancair were ok. Only when he knew this was the case did he ask him when he believed they would be able to run again. He only asked this as he knew his bosses would ask this information of him and iterated this reason to me at the time of his asking the question.

They were able to finish the engine run. As part of that process, they positioned the airplane on runway 01/19, and as such put out a NOTAM. They closed taxiway A4 between runways 19 and 14. They also put people in vehicles at the approach ends of runway 14, 19, and at the intersection of runway 14/32 and 01/19. Finally, they put out barricades.

The digest was e-mailed to Jason Ali and Mike Willingham (SEF Executive Director) for review on April 10, 2018. Mr. Ali replied on April 14, 2018, at 1118 EDT with comments that were incorporated into the narrative. The corrected digest was e-mail to Mr. Ali on April 16, 2018. He replied on April 17, 2018, at 1832 EDT with, "Good Evening Mr. Monville, I have read over the draft you sent to me and everything looks to be in order...."

² NTSB review of KSEF Common Traffic Advisory Frequency (CTAF) recordings from LiveATC.net for the periods 1030 UTC through 1230 UTC revealed no broadcast concerning the engine run. Mr. Ali advised the radio calls from Mr. Pratts and Ali on the CTAF announcing the engine run might not be recorded. It could not be discerned if there were any transmission from aircraft on the ground. Local time requires subtraction of 4 hours from UTC time.



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Timothy W. Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: April 16, 2018
Person Contacted: Terry Elders
NTSB Accident Number: ERA18LA117

Narrative:

Mr. Terry Elders was contacted by phone on April 16, 2018, at 1100 EDT. He was called at [REDACTED] Mr. Elders 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 the purpose of an NTSB investigation is for safety only, and any person NTSB talks with has the right to representation; he asked to have Mr. Zach Easton be present during the interview. Mr. Easton provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED]

Mr. Elders indicated his mailing address is [REDACTED] Sebring, Florida [REDACTED]. He is not a pilot, and he is the "Maintenance Department" at Sebring Regional Airport (KSEF). He began working there on March 21, 2016. Before working at KSEF, he was involved in maintenance at an International Short Wave radio station. He indicated that as part of his job, he carries a portable VHF transceiver radio that has 2 frequencies permanently set. They are the KSEF common traffic advisory frequency (CTAF), and the KSEF AWOS. It is always tuned to the CTAF.

With respect to the accident date, he arrived at KSEF about 0715, and reported that when he arrived at work, the B737 was not in position for the engine runs. As part of the engine runs that day, he was not asked for approval to run from that spot, nor did he give approval to anyone that day to perform engine runs from that spot. He further indicated that even if he was asked, he could not approve that because he does not have the authority to do so.

About 0720, he recalled hearing an occupant of a Cessna 172 announcement of performing touch-and-go landings at KSEF, but once that initial call was made he never heard another call

from that airplane even though it remained in the airport traffic pattern. On that day, he described the amount of aircraft as crazy. Some of the airplanes inbound to KSEF from Sarasota were known as the breakfast crew. He described that there was one airplane doing a touch-and-go landing remaining close-in, while other airplanes were doing wide patterns. He described seeing 2 near misses (within about 100-150 ft of each other), of the T&G airplane and another airplane. Overall, he described very little communications on the CTAF. Because of the hectic pattern, he diverted his attention.

He did position a HazMat trailer in advance of the engine run but did not recall what time that occurred. He indicated that when that occurred the B737 was lined up with a tug for tow to the spot. After the HazMat equipment was positioned, he had nothing more to do with the engine runs until the accident occurred. He tended to his other duties and responsibilities, and while working, recalled hearing a radio communication on the KSEF CTAF screaming, “hold or hold short on taxiway Alpha 4, stop on A4, hold or hold short on taxiway A4, stop on A4.”

He learned of the accident and proceeded to the site. He reported he did not witness it occurring.

Several days after the accident, while speaking with Chris Lord, who owns a gyroplane, Terry learned it was Chris who had screamed on the CTAF for the airplane to stop.

Terry was asked if he was part of the approval process at KSEF to approve engine runs. He indicated that he was not. He was also asked if on that day he recalled hearing an announcement on the KSEF CTAF from either the B737 or any ground personnel associated with the engine run announcing the engine run. He indicated that he could not recall, and even if an announcement was made, he would not recall that because he would not be involved in the engine run process.

In past engine runs, pilot’s would advise each other on the CTAF of the engine run. He also indicated that engine runs were required to have a NOTAM disseminated¹.

Postaccident, the engine run was completed. As part of that process, Terry was directly involved in the process near the airplane either blocking a taxiway. That process will remain in place until new procedures are implemented.

Mr. Easton indicated that moving forward with respect to engine runs, they are working to:

1. Require a work permit with barricades as required
2. KSEF to determine the best location for an engine run
3. Possible dissemination of a NOTAM
4. Installation of a permanently mounted VHF transceiver in an airport vehicle

Mr. Easton brought up that in his mind, if taxiway A4 had been barricaded, the accident would likely not have occurred.

¹ Per NTSB Record of Conversation with Jason M. Ali and Zach Easton on April 6, 2018, Mr. Easton advised NTSB that the engine run would not have been announced as a NOTAM because the B737 was on a taxiway.

The digest was e-mailed to them for review on April 16, 2018. On April 4, 2019, at 0818 EDT, Mr. Terry Elders replied with comments that were incorporated into the narrative. The corrected digest was e-mailed to him the same day.



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Timothy W. Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: April 23, 2018
Person Contacted: Juan Nunez
NTSB Accident Number: ERA18LA117

Narrative:

Mr. Juan Nunez was contacted by phone on April 23, 2018 at 1407 EDT. He was called at [REDACTED]. The phone rang and a voicemail message could not be left. He returned the phone call the same day at 1413, and advised that he was expecting an email from NTSB¹. He tentatively suggested an interview for April 25th, as he already had a meeting planned with Erik Rodriguez.

On April 25, 2018 at 1107 EDT, a phone call was made by Erik Rodriguez to NTSB. The phone call was made from [REDACTED]. Present on the call were Mr. Juan Nunez, Mr. Erik Rodriguez, and Mr. José Rodriguez, who was the owner of Xtreme Aviation. Mr. José Rodriguez provided an email address of [REDACTED].

At the beginning of the phone call they were 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. They were also informed that the purpose of an NTSB investigation is for safety only, and any person NTSB talks with has the right to representation; they agreed to the interview without representation.

Mr. Juan Nunez indicated he is an airframe mechanic with certificate number [REDACTED]. He has been employed by Xtreme Aviation for about two years, and his title is Field Service Supervisor. He is not a pilot. On the date and time of the accident, he was getting on the job training (OJT) from Mr. Erik Rodriguez concerning engine runs. He has been getting engine run training for either a few weeks or a few months.

¹ The email was sent to Mr. Nunez on April 23, 2018 at 1423 EDT, to [REDACTED]

Mr. Erik Rodriguez indicated that he is an airframe and powerplant mechanic with certificate number [REDACTED]. He has been employed by Xtreme Aviation a little over one year. He is not a pilot. He is engine run approved/certified since late 2017, or early 2018.

With respect to the engine run of the CFM56, they were testing the No. 1 engine. They needed to perform a vibration survey at 85%. It was also reported that when doing an engine run, they could not quickly reduce thrust, rather they would have to gradually reduce thrust in order to avoid seizing the engine. In advance of the engine run, they notified Volo Aviation, who would in turn tell them the time and location where the engine run was to be performed.

The airplane was a serviceable B737, which included VHF radios. They were not monitoring the SEF CTAF, but they did monitor the AWOS. The No. 1 engine was worked on by Global Engine Maintenance (GEM), but they did not have any airframe mechanics; therefore, they did not have anybody who was engine run qualified. Because of that, GEM subcontracted with Xtreme Aviation to perform the engine run. GEM had an agreement with SEF personnel to allow GEM to mount engines onto their B737 to be used as a test bed.

In preparation of the engine run, the airplane was towed from the ramp to the engine run spot between 0730 and 0800. The airplane was parked near the taxiway with the engine exhaust pointed/directed into the grass. Messrs. Nunez and Rodriguez were in the airplane during the tow, and Erik indicated that he saw one airplane doing a touch-and-go landing on runway 01. Personnel of Volo Aviation escorted the airplane to the spot, which was near the approach end of runway 19. They were asked if there was any interaction between personnel of Volo Aviation and airport personnel, and they indicated they were not sure, but they were not present nor were they part of that conversation. Personnel of Volo Aviation gave them approval for the engine run. Prior to the run, there was no safety briefing by the personnel involved. Actions regarding the engine run were broadcast at the time they were occurring. They were also asked who was in charge of the engine run and the reply was that it was a team concept, with Volo Aviation being their eyes for what's happening outside around the airplane.

Prior to the engine run, Messrs. Nunez and Rodriguez did not express any concern to Volo Aviation personnel regarding the proposed engine run location, or airplane traffic. One of the individuals indicated that when they are performing engine run(s) at a large airport such as Miami International Airport, they are in charge and control the situation. However, while at SEF which is an uncontrolled field, they relinquished control and relied upon Volo Aviation for safe engine run operation. It was relayed that they would need for the future engine run(s) they would take a more positive role.

Mr. Nunez was in the left seat, while Mr. Rodriguez was in the right seat, and was writing down engine performance information. Additional personnel in the cockpit included the engine customer, and an individual from Global Engine Maintenance (GEM). Messrs. Nunez and Rodriguez were equipped with portable walkie-talkie type devices, that were used to communicate to personnel of Volo Aviation, who consisted of two people in separate vehicles near the nose landing gear of the airplane. Volo Aviation personnel were responsible for monitoring the SEF CTAF frequency. There were no barricades in place. While the engines were running they had the beacons, and high intensity lights on. Mr. Erik Rodriguez indicated that the

two Volo Aviation personnel gave them the okay to begin the engine run. They started the engines and then warmed them up. Once that occurred they informed Volo Aviation that they would be advancing the power to 85% on the left engine, and would have the right engine at about 50%. The engines remained at that power setting for about one minute, and at that time Erik indicated that he saw one vehicle that was occupied by a Volo Aviation individual speed to their left but there is no radio communication on the walkie-talkies. He was not sure why the vehicle was moving, but then heard "Code 19 Code 19" followed by "shut down the engines." Erik indicated that "Code 19" meant nothing to him, but the direction to secure the engines was what got them to secure them. They gradually reduced engine thrust, secured the airplane, then opened the door. They noted that a Lancair was blown into the grass. The nose landing gear of the Lancair collapsed, and there were no injuries. They reconnected the tug and the airplane was towed to the ramp.

Afterwards, there was a general discussion by all regarding what had transpired. Volo Aviation personnel told them that one of them sped off in an attempt to intercept the Lancair, but could not get there in time. They also relayed that there was a lot of airplanes flying in to eat at the restaurant. And in their past experience, in instances where there would be an engine run planned and lots of airplanes flying in, SEF would not allow an engine run to occur. Jose Rodriguez indicated that during previous engine run(s) at SEF, someone would disseminate a NOTAM for engine runs to alert pilots. He also indicated that in 2015 and 2016, when doing engine runs at SEF, someone would broadcast on the SEF CTAF that an airplane was on a taxiway with the engines running.

In the past, if Volo Aviation noted an aircraft was getting close to their airplane while the engines were running, Volo Aviation personnel would be quick to respond to the airplane to safely escort them.

The spot they used was the same spot they used for the majority of the time at SEF. When asked if the closed runway would have been more suitable for the engine run, they indicated that Volo Aviation who gets approval from the airport, would not have allowed it. They were informed in this instance airport personnel (Terry Elders) reported he was not contacted in advance nor did he give approval for that engine run.

To prevent a similar occurred it was suggested that somebody in the aircraft monitor the SEF common traffic advisory frequency (CTAF). They indicated that the responsibility to monitor that falls to Volo Aviation, who was responsible to notify them of any hazard due to a landing airplane. It was offered by one of the individuals that while at the Sebring Regional Airport (SEF), pilots do not announce their arrival to the airport on the SEF CTAF, and inferred that could have been the case with the accident pilot. The group was informed that NTSB had in its possession audio recordings from Live ATC.net that captured air communications from aircraft inbound to SEF. My review of that recording indicated that the accident pilot made six different radio calls announcing his approach to the airport. The radio calls were made when the flight was 20, 10, 5, 2, and 1 mile away. He also made a call that he was on short final. They were also advised that there were no radio calls from aircraft made while on the ground at SEF, but that was not because they were not made, rather, they were not picked up.

Postaccident, personnel from SEF made changes regarding engine run procedures, including being more involved in the decision making, scheduling, and also requiring 24-hour notice.

Since a formal engine run briefing was not accomplished before the run but was actually accomplished during the process, and the term “Code 19” was unknown to them, it was suggested to Mr. José Rodriguez that his company consider performing a safety briefing before every engine run with all personnel involved (including Volo Aviation), to discuss issues related to the run, and expected actions of all personnel. It was also suggested that the briefing include emergency procedures for all personnel. Mr. José Rodriguez indicated he would consider that suggestion and would let NTSB know if he incorporated that into their procedures.

The digest was e-mailed to Jose Rodriguez and Juan Nunez for review on April 25, 2018. Mr. Erik Rodriguez replied on October 9, 2018, at 1418 EDT with, “Good afternoon, Timothy Yes, the information on the record of Conversation submitted is correct to the best of our knowledge. Yes, procedures have been established in order to avoid a reoccurrence. [Thanks].”