



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

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Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

April 5, 2018

Subject: ERA18LA119
Who: Mr. Allan Witkin – Pilot of airplane flying with accident airplane from Bahamas.

In a telephone interview, Mr. Witkin stated following:

- We spent 5 days in the Bahamas. We are very close to them up here.
- The weather was great when we took off from the Bahamas.
- We filed an APIS arrival for 1115 at Ft. Pierce.
- I took off before him because he was topping off his fuel.
- We had breakfast at 730 am, were out at the airport by 830 am.
- We were flying at 8000 ft msl.
- I Talked to him air to air twice.
- First time I talked to him, He was doing 200 knots, I was doing 175
- Second time he talked to me, He was 300 miles from ft Peirce, I was 200 miles from Ft. Pierce
- We were direct SURFN intersection then direct ANGEE
- The ADS-B was working fine.
- As we approached SURFN 50 miles out, I had weather on the screen. I could see it was right over the SURFN intersection. There was a buildup that was about 15,000 ft vertical. It had a red center but there was no lightning detected.
- Planes in front of me were requesting to divert to the left of the weather.
- A King Air requested 4,000 and ATC gave him 5,000.
- They gave me 4000, and said go to the left since I couldn't go over SURFN due to the weather.
- When I was west and south of SURFN I was IMC.
- I Requested Direct ANGEE and they sent me direct to Ft. Pierce.
- It was clear and sunny and then as we approached SURFN, we were in the clouds.
- I deviated around the build up to the left.

- This was the western most build up and there was more to the North.
- I was still in the clouds and descending while approaching Ft. Pierce.
- I stayed in the clouds until 1,200 ft - 1,600 ft msl.
- Ft. Pierce would have been VFR.
- I did a visual landing and waited for my buddy and he never showed.
- I went back out with tower's permission and searched for 2.1 hours and then ran low on fuel, so I had to come back.
- There was a Baron behind me after I came in from the search, somebody told him to look for the Lancair.
- He said he was in and out of IMC while doing a few circuits to search.
- The deck had come down lower 1400-1500 ft.
- The flight aware path shows him going into the buildup, made a 180 degree turn to get out.
- Initially I thought it broke up in flight, and the VNE was 235.
- My only thoughts are that he lost it and he impacted the ocean.
- We had a 15 knot tailwind during our flight.
- Mr. Witkin's airplane registration number is N167M
- The airplane N57A - C210 was behind him in flight.
- He entered the clouds when he was about 30 miles off the shore.
- He went into the clouds and there was no turbulence.
- He was talking to Miami on 132.15, they said descend to 4,000 and go to SURFN.
- 1130-1100- 132.5 ATC transmissions. The accident airplane should have gotten in 15 minutes after me.
- He would be right at the beginning of the 1130 tape.
- My GPS said an arrival time to Ft. Pierce at 1108 and then it changed to 1111.
- The pilot was adamant about doing things right. The pilot was very thorough with his airplane. He was also building an Aircam. Very meticulous about taking care of his airplanes.
- Allan has an A&P. He would watch the pilot work on the airplanes and he was meticulous.
- The pilot also had a turbine helicopter. It was a homebuilt. It was completed in the hangar
- He was a talented man. He worked on the Aircam and Lancair.
- Pilot also has a hangar in Beverly, Mass. He has a home in Hamilton, Mass.
- Him being the builder, he could do the conditional inspection on them.
- Mr. Witkin is going to look for the maintenance records in the pilot's hangar at Spruce Creek and will call if he finds them.