



NTSB RECORD OF CONVERSATION

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Date: 11/15/2019
Person Interviewed: Mr. Matthew Hood -Mechanic
NTSB Accident Number: ERA19FA034

The following is a summary of a conversation that occurred with the above-named individual:

- Mr. Hood stated that he knew the owner of Cloud 9 helicopters for 8-9 years.
- Mr. Hood is a certified A&P mechanic and IA, and a student pilot with about 300 hours total hours of flight experience mostly in rotorcraft.
- He did contract work for Cloud 9 Helicopters from 2011-2017 but was never an employee.
- He became involved in the N198LT build-assist when Geoff Painter asked him to assist Calvin Cannon so that he could do some of these “builds” later (that never happened).
- He reported that there were a lot of “hiccups” with respect to the build: it seemed like there was a lot of going backwards to go forwards. Mr. Cannon required that they back up and start over when he arrived.
- He stated that the build instructions were in German and English, but that the English translation was very poor. It was his understanding that the document had been translated “in house” via nepotism and was a poor translation.
- He noted that there were a couple of discrepancies as to parts that were available in the kit, but he cannot recall what they were. It seemed to him that a lot of parts did not come complete. Some parts were in different bags and it was necessary to hunt for them. He recalled a connector for an electronic system that did not come with the kit (there was a different style that came with it, making him think that perhaps it was an older kit). Some of the missing parts were sent from Auto-Gyro, and some were sent from Utah.
- He stated that Calvin had initiated the work and had mounted the engine, and he had helped him a bit but was also busy keeping the Cloud 9 Flight School fleet going as their sole maintenance support.
- He stated that Mr. Trillo participated in about 10-15% of the build, mostly doing minor items, and that Calvin installed the flight control cables. Mr. Hood assisted Calvin with



NTSB RECORD OF CONVERSATION

the engine and rotor head set-up, but Calvin was charged with installing these items. Mr. Hood put on the rotor blades.

- He recalled a setting for the control cables but doesn't remember what it was or if there was discussion. There was a process of shimming up the hub: a washer on one side marked with one dot, and another marked with two dots.
- He stated that there was a builder's log that the builder/owner (Mr. Trillo) was responsible for keeping, and someone (he cannot recall who) took photos.
- Mr. Hood put on the data plate and that was all he did with respect to the certification.
- He stated that a factory representative by the name of Michael Bartlett looked over the aircraft after it was completed around August 19, 2017, signed Mr. Hood's certificate for Cavalon and found and fixed some discrepancies. It was test flown within a month. Someone from Cloud 9 would have done the flight check prior to pick-up.
- Mr. Hood stated that he may have been the first to run the gyrocopter and taxi it around, but he cannot recall who flew it first for the test flight.
- He stated that the Rotax Service Bulletin was part of the Condition Inspection that he performed. Investigator Rayner stated that when Mr. Hood signed off the condition inspection there were 16.6 hours on the Hobbs meter, and when Mr. Lord picked it up there were 40.0 on the Hobbs. Mr. Hood stated that this sounded correct, since they (Cloud 9) were out flying it around.
- When it was flown after the inspection by Chris Lord, Mr. Hood went out to the ramp and pointed out that the carburetors were leaking, and they hadn't been when he had the gyrocopter. He thought Mr. Lord would have him fix that, but he didn't. Instead, he departed in the accident gyrocopter.
- He stated that Geoff Painter performed the fly-off, and it seemed like they had been flying it "all day" one day. He was not present for the initial test flight.
- He did not recall how long after the condition inspection someone came to pick up the gyrocopter but stated that they "flew it around there after the inspection" and that Cloud 9 would have picked it up. He believed that all the records were required to be kept in the nose compartment.
- When asked about the transponder test, Mr. Hood responded that he typically called up someone who came out to perform that, and that Mike Ruth may have been involved.
- When asked if Terri Rose from Auto-Gyro was there during the build, Mr. Hood responded that she was there when Michael Bartlett was there.
- When asked if he had anything to add, Mr. Hood indicated that someone played what had been captured over the UNICOM radio just prior to the accident and he could hear the



NTSB RECORD OF CONVERSATION

engine increasing and decreasing in RPM. He said he believed that Mr. Lord flew the aircraft after learning that there was leaking in the carburetor and didn't do anything about it.

- Investigator Rayner asked if air could leak into a carburetor and cause the engine to surge and Mr. Hood responded, "Yes"