



NTSB RECORD OF CONVERSATION

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Date: 4/4/2019, 11:05 am
Person Interviewed: Calvin Cannon, A&P Mechanic
NTSB Accident Number: ERA19FA034

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

- Mr. Cannon was hired to provide guidance and mechanical work in the early stages of assembly for N198LT. He was not hired to perform a complete build-assist, but to provide 5-days of guidance and labor to begin and focus the assembly of N198LT at Cloud 9 Helicopters in West Palm Beach, Florida.
- Mr. Cannon stated that he had previously assembled 4 kits in their entirety, including a Cavalon kit, and had assisted with different stages of assembly of kits several times.
- He stated that he possessed an A& P mechanic certificate and a current inspection authorization, and that he is not a pilot.
- When asked if Autogyro, Inc. require mechanics/builders to keep any records of the build or fly-off process to stay an assist provider, he responded, "Not that I am aware of or remember from Autogyro. I do remember a couple of owners producing something like their own progress sheet to keep track of."
- When asked about pricing of the build assist, he explained that there is a set price for a complete assembly, or estimates are offered for requests such as "we need help getting started," and other times work is by the hour.
- When asked about the pay arrangement for the work with this gyrocopter, he responded that this work was paid as a daily rate for five days, and that he was paid the full amount for five days. He further stated that although a kit like this cannot be completed in five days, this is enough time to get the effort "off the ground" if there is the support on site that he expected. He explained that these are five 10-12 hours days, and that a significant amount of progress can be made, but that all consumables must be there. These things come in many boxes. Fuselage then many boxes with things just thrown in there.



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- He explained that these kits come in several boxes, and that there is no rhyme or reason as to what goes into each box, so one must dig through boxes with hundreds of pieces and lay the parts out. He stated that this was the case for all previous builds that he did.
- He stated that he always laid out the parts like it was an assembly line in order to put a kit together. He explained that if you follow the assembly instructions in order, everything will fit in, but if you don't follow the instructions in order, they don't fit together, or things will simply be harder to put together.
- He added that even though the assembly instructions are very detailed and accurate about the order of assembly, but that there are a couple things that are not included in the instructions, that the builder must know from experience to do in a certain order.
- When asked what areas the builder typically works in a builder assist program, he responded that this is "case by case: some owners may be comfortable with their skill set in doing A-Z, but when it comes to H, I and J, they are not comfortable."
- When asked who makes decision as to when the aircraft is ready to be flown, he responded that the builder makes this decision, but that in this circumstance, only 15% was completed when he left. He explained that he could not do a lot because although there was a list of tools and consumables needed to do each section, none of these consumables and the majority but not all of the tools were there when he arrived. He had to go to Sears in Palm Beach to buy and modify tools. He and the other mechanic who was there for the first three days had to go to several stores to find one of the adhesives. He explained that although this kit was an experimental, and you can use substitutes, he did not like to.
- When asked about the protocol for the construction of the Cavalon, he responded that there are directions for 98% of the work, and if you follow the instructions you will have a successful build, but that you must follow it page by page and step by step. The 2% that is left out is where they assume that you know that you "need to put something in here before you do something else."
- He stated that he did not use a builder's log, nor did he see one. He did not take or see anyone take any photographs of the work being done, although he stated that Ms. Terri Rose (?) may have taken pictures. She was there and picked him up from the airport and was there the whole time he was there, although he explained that she had a flight school she was running so that didn't watch the actual build.
- When asked what the usual time frame is for completion and is there a log that's kept of the difficulties encountered in each build, he responded that if everything is on hand (tools and consumables), and if they don't run into any "show-stoppers," it should take



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12-14 days to build these planes depending upon the avionics package used. He added that steam gauges are faster.

- He stated that there were no discussions as to who would do the fly-off. The owner of the airplane knew that he wasn't there to finish the project, but just to move things along as far as possible in the five days he was present to assist.
- He stated when he arrived, he noted that someone had already started to put parts of the kit together. As a result, they had to start all over from scratch and Mr. Trillo, the owner, was displeased that the assembly they had already done needed to be disassembled. He seemed agitated about it. He explained that he did not note any discrepancies with what was already built, but that things put together out of order, so he simply had to take those things apart and start from the beginning. It really wasn't that much that they had done.
- He explained that the owner was on site with him the first day he was there, showed up a couple times for maybe ½ hour to an hour, and then came to talk to him after he was there several days to talk for 3-4 hours.
- When asked if he was involved in connecting flight controls, he responded that he was not.
- When asked if any kits were "cannibalized" to replace broken or missing parts, he responded that he noticed no missing or broken parts, and that he recalled no other boxes being broken into to find other parts.
- In response to whether he had any further information to add, he responded, "No. I don't remember a whole lot. I remember the most that they said that they would have everything ready to go. You really need to have a second set of hands there. Some things require two people." He explained that the other mechanic was with him for the first 3 days and Mr. Trillo did not assist and "seemed agitated that it was taking so long for Autogyro USA or the fellas there in Miami Beach to get his gyro together." He said that Mr Trillo didn't want them taking the time to go to lunch, so he would bring their lunch in, but that they had to leave to go find the adhesives they needed. He added that he didn't think that part upset him, but that he just wanted them to be there working as much as they could.
- He explained that Mr. Trillo arrived on Day 4 just before lunch and offered to go get lunch. After he dropped the sandwiches off and talked for about 5 minutes, he left and said he would be back the next day (Day 5). He recalled responding, "Great, because I could use someone to help me."
- He reported that the morning of Day 5, when he found out that Mr. Trillo was not feeling great and would not be back as planned, he spent the remainder of his time getting things in order so that they could complete the work when they returned. He was asked by Mr.



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Trillo and Ms. Painter to stay on longer, but he had other work, and he let them know that he could not stay longer. He had to leave the next day for his 12 days back on duty at his normal job.

- He asked if he could share his opinion, and continued, "I have been doing this for a long time. I have worked for a couple of aviation companies doing aircraft repair. A lot of times they have had to go pick up some of the damaged aircraft, and wondered, "wow, how did that thing stay together?" It was my opinion since the first day we were putting these Cavalons together, I have always thought that if any one of these was involved in anything more than a hard landing, there wouldn't be anything left."