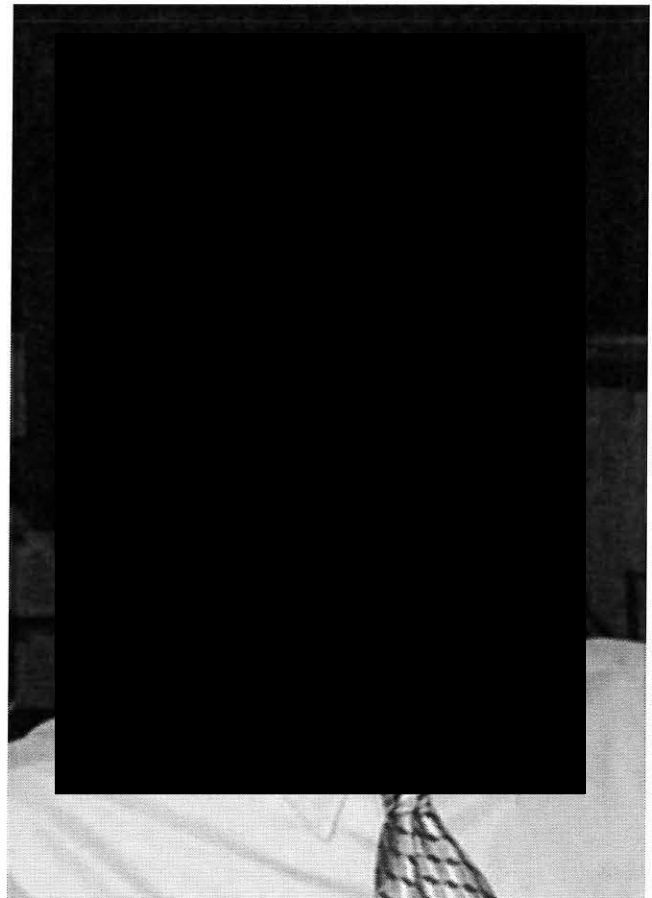


30 October 2018
Fatal Gyrocopter Crash N198LT
Sebring, Florida



Victim #1	Christopher Lord
Victim #2	Christopher Brugger
Owner of craft	CAVALON GYRO LLC Louis Trillo [REDACTED] Florida
Manufacturer	Autogyro Assembled, Build Assist by Cloud 9 Helicopters
Model	Autogyro Cavalon

Information on the crash

Ret. Lt. Colonel Dan Holcomb

Greg Spicola

Jeff Hudson

See Statement [REDACTED]

Curt Ruggles

See Statement [REDACTED]

Jason Wilkinson

CFI

Kevin Turner

Bill Holzgrove

Kathy and Ross Howitt

See Statement

AutoGyro

Terri Rose

[REDACTED] CEO Autogyro USA [REDACTED]

Cloud 9 Helicopters

Geoff Painter

CEO

Andy Wall

Andy (used to be CEO of Autogyro USA is now the CEO of ELA USA)

Denny Velarde

Test Pilot of N198LT-First Flight

The reason for this report is to express our concerns over Chris Lord and Chris Brugger's gyrocopter crash on October 30, 2018. It has come to the attention that when the Cavalon gyrocopter (manufactured by Autogyro, build assist by Cloud 9 Helicopters for owner, Louis Trillo) was built, the control teleflexes (PPC push pull cables) were not installed correctly and possibly damaged during assembly. This defect was not immediately evident to Lord and Brugger when they chose to take the craft for a demo flight that ultimately ended in the fatal crash.

The Cavalon gyrocopter N198LT was built in 2017 (received its airworthiness certificate date 6-27-17); According to the NTSB accident report, as of October 4, 2018 the Cavalon had only 16.6 hours of flight on it (one year and four months after the airworthiness certificate issue date). This fact raises concerns, as there are so few hours on this aircraft over a longer period of time, and suddenly within just the month of October 4, 2018, an additional 22 hours were reported on the aircraft hour meter.

Chris Lord was employed by Autogyro USA as COO. Since Autogyro USA did not have a gyrocopter to use at an upcoming airshow, Lord was asked by his employer to move the gyrocopter in question from Cloud 9's hanger at North County Airport (West Palm Beach) to DeLand Florida. This was to be used as the display/demo model and Autogyro stated they could also assist in the sale of the Cavalon at the show. Lord was flown to West Palm Beach by another gyro pilot, Jeff Hudson via a separate gyrocopter, and after picking the gyro up from Cloud 9 on Oct 29th, Lord brought the Cavalon gyro to Sebring to prep it for the show; Jeff Hudson followed Lord to Sebring (See attached Jeff Hudson and Dan Holcomb emails). Before leaving North Co. Airport, Lord discovered that the maintenance log on the Cavalon was not signed off. Lord went back inside Cloud 9 Helicopters office to have the log signed. Once Lord took off, he realized and radioed Jeff that the air speed indicator on the Cavalon was not working and the gyro had more than normal stick shake. Lord was able to fly the Cavalon to Sebring regardless because he felt they were minor issues. When he landed in Sebring, Lord fixed the instrument by correctly connecting the air speed indicator. Lord told Jeff Hudson that he did not think the airspeed indicator had been hooked up. They also worked on the stick shake, but this was not a reason for concern. Chris has flown in many gyros with stick shake, so he felt it was not something to ground the gyro. The last thing that Chris and Jeff found was a fuel leak from the carburetor float bowls into the drip trays. They took the engine cowl off and retorqued the carburetor bowls. They then looked the engine and engine mounts over good. The airspeed indicator and the fuel leak should have been fixed during the 40-hour condition inspection that was signed off on when Chris picked up the gyro on Monday, October 29. Chris was extremely experienced doing maintenance on many different gyrocopters because of the many models he had flown and worked on in the past. He was especially familiar with the Cavalon.

While in Sebring, Lord spoke to Kathy and Ross Howitt at the Sebring Airport. The Howitt's occupy the hangar near the hangar Chris was using to work on the Cavalon. Kathy stated (see attached Kathy Howitt statement) that Chris voiced questions about who would have flown as many hours as shown on the meter off of the Cavalon when the gyro had a lot of stick shake and the airspeed indicator was not hooked up (the meter showed over 38 hours on the gyrocopter but earlier in the month it had only 16.6 hours). Lord told Kathy that he suspected that he didn't think anyone flew

the gyrocopter, but simply ran it while grounded to make it look as if it was flown. However, Chris couldn't test this suspicion without some needed tools.

While in Sebring, Lord also met up with another gyrocopter pilot, Chris Brugger. Brugger was having his gyrocopter serviced and while being serviced, Lord and Brugger agreed to fly Brugger back to his home airport (Tampa Area) in the Cavalon, and give Brugger a demo flight in the Cavalon. Brugger was interested in a side by side seated gyrocopter, which the Cavalon was.

On October 30, 20018 at approximately 18:30 hours I was informed by some of my co-workers about Lord's crash. I immediately called Dan Holcomb, a mutual friend of mine and Lord, to check if he had heard of the crash. After lengthy discussion with Dan, as well as visiting with Chris Lord's wife, we began to have suspicions/concerns about the accident. Chris Lord was such an established, knowledgeable gyrocopter pilot that has faced many adverse situations successfully. His knowledge and hands-on involvement in every aspect of the gyrocopter community as well as involvement with related Federal agencies makes this accident virtually impossible without "non-pilot" errors contributing to the ultimate outcome of this incident.

Since the time of the accident I have learned that there was a past business relationship between Chris Lord and Cloud 9 Helicopters of North Co. Airport (West Palm Beach). Below is the account of that business relationship, as expressed by Crissa Lord (Chris's wife).

In December of 2015, Chris Lord and his family were in West Palm Beach, where Chris was training an FAA person under the governmental contract he had with the FAA (he held this contract for many years). While training at North Co. Airport, Chris met Geoff Painter, owner of Cloud 9 Helicopters, and they quickly began to talk about going into a business partnership to create a gyrocopter build and training center at North Co. Airport. Chris was not selling aircraft for a specific company currently but was doing a lot of flight instruction to individuals all over the US. Chris and Geoff agreed to the partnership and Chris started training Geoff's pilots as gyrocopter instructors. This training was complete by the fall of 2016 and the instructors became FAA certified. Lord invested thousands of his own dollars into the partnership and did not get paid for the training he did for Geoff and his instructors. In the Summer-Fall of 2016 Chris signed an agreement to become the US CEO/importer of ELA USA (a Spanish gyroplane manufacture). Chris and Geoff communicated several times that Fall about being the ELA USA team at Cloud 9. In January of 2017, Chris found out that Geoff had teamed with Andy Walh (Autogyro USA) to be a distributor in Florida. Basically, Geoff went behind Chris' back. Chris and his family loaded up all the equipment they had in Geoff's hanger and moved everything to Sebring Airport. Sebring Airport is where Chris and his family established GyroplaneGuy Training Facility and the location for ELA USA Importer. Geoff and Chris went their separate ways and were always cordial to each other after that.

In December of 2017, Chris terminated his business relationship with ELA USA and took a break from gyroplane importing/manufacturing. GyroplaneGuy continued to do gyroplane instruction in Sebring until July of 2018. Meanwhile in March 2018, Andy Walh was either fired or asked to resign from Autogyro USA and he teamed up with Geoff Painter at Cloud 9 helicopters at North County Airport to be the CEO (I think this is his title) of ELA USA.

Chris and his family moved back to Illinois (where they previously lived) in July 2018. July 1, 2018 Chris took the role of COO of Autogyro USA working with Terri Rose who is the CEO of the company. Chris oversaw the manufacturing side, building Autogyro dealers, selling aircraft, the certification process, etc.

It has been reported by numerous individuals within the gyrocopter community (i.e. Greg Spicola) that even Andy Wahl, would not fly the Cavalon gyrocopter N198LT and that he trailered it when he went to airshows. After the Cavalon was built, the original owner, Louis Trillo, decided not to keep the gyro due to a damaged flight control cable. At that point, Cloud 9 decided to try and sell the gyrocopter, with the original sale price at \$110,000. This price was later lowered to \$84,000; The Cavalon had been drastically discounted for a quick sale. (Please see Curt Ruggles statement for further details).

I have been in contact with Greg Spicola, gyrocopter instructor pilot and friend of Lord and Brugger. Greg has first-hand knowledge of the Cavalon in question and the terrible operating condition which it was in. Greg stated to me personally that he wouldn't have allowed anyone to fly the Cavalon and cannot believe that Cloud 9 would permit anyone to fly it either. Spicola has contacted the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB)-Investigator Rayner and other related agencies, relaying specific details of the unsafe conditions of the gyrocopter, as well as grave concerns that Cloud 9 Helicopters and the owner Louis Trillo allowed Lord to fly the gyrocopter despite knowing the damaged flight control cable and other mechanical issues. Greg heard from the first test pilot, Denny Velarde who flew the Cavalon. Denny stated that he would not fly the gyrocopter again.

I, along with others listed on this report, all agree if Lord knew about the condition of the gyrocopter he would not have flown it. We believe that some documents may have been falsified by Cloud 9 Helicopters so they could make a quick sale without regard to the safety and well-being of anyone piloting or even interested in owning the gyrocopter. We do have concerns that, with the history between Cloud 9 Helicopters, ELA and Lord, this act may have been malicious, if not negligent, to say the least. Lord was well known and respected in the gyrocopter industry, and his word carried an overwhelming weight and positive influence. One of our many concerns is that Cloud 9 Helicopters was worried that Lord may adversely affect their overall business due to the abrupt break of their business agreement with Lord, and this prompted Cloud 9 Helicopters to act carelessly and withhold vital information regarding the Cavalon gyrocopter.

I have personally contacted the NTSB and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The investigation is ongoing and there are many people that have pertinent information that need to share their wealth of details. I hope that the Lord and Brugger families will eventually gain some peace, knowing that a thorough investigation has been conducted and any injustices that have occurred have been exposed and rectified to their fullest potential.

Please see the attached individual statements. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Kevin Turner