



NTSB RECORD OF CONVERSATION

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Date: 11/14/2018

Person Contacted: Paul Faltyn (Mechanic and Friend of Pilot)

NTSB Accident Number: ERA19FA039

Narrative:

Mr. Faltyn reported that he helped the accident pilot with maintenance tasks in the past with the accident airplane and had flown the airplane in the past. He reported the following details about the recent maintenance actions with the radar display and sensor.

- He reported that the radar unit was "intermittent" on a couple of flights prior to the August 2018 annual inspection. During the August 2018 annual inspection, the radar unit was removed and sent for repair at Texas AvRad.
- He reported that when the repaired radar display and receiver were returned, the unit still would not function as expected. Mr. Faltyn reported that the radar system was received from Texas AvRad and the display and antenna were reinstalled, and ground power was plugged into the accident airplane. With the ground power unit plugged in, the radar system was turned on to the standby position. After 5 minutes it was switched to the test position. The radar failed to display. The indicator was removed and reinstalled and the connector at the antenna was removed and re-installed to verify the connectors were making proper contact. The system was tried again several times and failed to turn on.
- Mr. Faltyn reported that he personally contacted Texas Avrad and discussed the problem with a technician. The technician provided the schematic necessary to verify if the power and ground were present from the indicator which controls the antenna functioned. All indications were normal. Texas AvRad advised to return only the antenna to be re-inspected. The antenna only, was shipped back to Texas AvRad.
- According to Mr. Faltyn, after the second repair of the antenna, where only the antenna was repaired, he and the accident pilot, installed the antenna in the airplane. The ground power was plugged in and the system was turned on. It functioned normal and Mr. Faltyn observed from outside the aircraft that the antenna was sweeping correctly, and the tilt functioned properly in the manual setting and then confirmed the indicator was functioning properly. Mr. Faltyn reported, everything appeared to be working normal and roughly 20 to 30 minutes later it again failed. The screen went blank and the antenna stopped working.
- Mr. Faltyn reported that he again verified the correct power and ground output from the indicator in the harness. He contacted Texas AvRad again to report the failure and the customer service representative agreed to ship a loaner radar antenna unit to use while they tested and repaired the original antenna again, which would have been the third repair on the antenna.



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- He reported that the loaner “dish” antenna worked “perfect” with the display in test mode while on the ground and it operated for over an hour with no failures. However, the “dish” was 12.5 inches wide, and only a 10.5-inch-wide radar antenna fit in the nose of the accident airplane. This loaner dish was tested around October 10-15th, 2018, according to Mr. Faltyn.
- Mr. Faltyn reported that he informed a representative at Texas AvRad, that the “loaner” unit worked with the display, but it was too large.
- Mr. Faltyn explained that Texas AvRad chose to send a “replacement” receiver sensor, rather than repair the original receiver sent for a repair a second time. This replacement exchange unit was mailed to Mr. Faltyn’s home on October 22, 2018. Mr. Faltyn reported that the owner of the airplane was out of town, so he left the package in the hangar for N5044J at Niagra Falls (IAG) airport. After the accident occurred, Mr. Faltyn reported that the receiver and box that he left in hangar, was not present.
- Mr. Faltyn was asked how long it would take to install the receiver, in his best judgement. He stated it would take about 20 minutes, and he stated that pilot was a mechanic and was very familiar with how to install the radar dish. Mr. Faltyn stated that he did not install the replacement receiver, and did not speak with the pilot prior to the accident flight.
- He reported that he believed the only other maintenance event between the annual in August 2018 and the accident flight was an oil change.