



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Pilot Interview

Peter Wentz
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

NTSB Accident Number: ERA19LA277

Pilot Interview (John Ducey)

Date: October 4, 2019

Narrative:

Mr. Ducey stated that he received a phone call from Luke Frazer on the Sunday afternoon previous to the accident date asking if he could get tailwheel instruction from him in his RV-6. Mr. Ducey asked Mr. Frazer how much flight time he had, and he replied with 5000 or 6000 hours. They made plans to ride together to Zephyrhills Municipal Airport (ZPH) and on the ride to the airport Mr. Frazer stated that he had about 5000 hours, but that it wasn't certified and that he was "suing the FAA because I don't need a license to fly". Mr. Ducey informed Mr. Frazer that assuming he won the lawsuit, and got his issues with the FAA cleared up, he would come back and sign off the instruction provided, but that he couldn't provide instruction today under these circumstances. He stated the only documentation provided him was a US passport, but did agree to fly the airplane for Mr. Frazer to ride along with him and see how the airplane handled and that it would only be a ride along and that he would be the pilot in command.

Mr. Ducey decided to fly over to South Lakeland Airport (X49) because he felt tailwheel airplanes like to land on sod runways. He conducted a preflight inspection of the airplane and found no anomalies. They departed ZPH and flew around the area for a while, then headed in for a landing at X49. He set up for a landing into a small crosswind but stated he didn't like the way the approach was going so he initiated a go around and got back in the pattern. On the second approach to landing, he was left of the runway and descending when "all the sudden the airplane banked to the left and headed pitch down about 8 or 10 degrees". He stated he tried to control the airplane, but the controls were solid. He recalls heading toward the tree and tried again to move the controls and this time the airplane pitched up slightly, but not enough to slow the descent and the airplane impacted trees and the ground. Once the airplane stopped Mr. Frazer got out and was looking over the wreckage. Once the medics arrived Mr. Frazer told them he didn't need medical attention and walked away from the airport. Mr. Ducey stated that he later heard Mr. Frazer retained a lawyer and did seek medical attention at a near by hospital. Mr. Ducey stated that back on the drive to ZPH Mr. Frazer told him he was flying powered hang gliders and Mr. Ducey thought that because of the airplane being left of the runway that Mr. Frazer applied control inputs to maneuver the airplane. With the airplane being controlled by both people, he could not control the airplane in the final seconds

of the flight. He stated that the airplane “definitely did not stall”. Mr. Ducey stated the airplane received substantial damage to the fuselage, both wings, elevator, and rudder.

He also reported that the airplane had no preimpact mechanical malfunctions or failures that would have precluded normal operation.

Mr. Ducey was asked how much flight time he had accumulated, he stated that he had over 35,000 hours total time, 6000 hours of instruction given and 49 hours in Vans aircraft. He stated he was a retire airline captain.

October 1, 2019

John Ducey

Certificate # [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Mr. Ducey was contacted on October 1, 2019, to ask details about the accident that occurred on September 23, 2019.

Mr. Ducey stated that Luke called him on Sunday (the day before) and ask him if he could give him some instruction in an airplane that he had just bought. He told Luke that he would go with him but he was not going to give him instruction. He asked Luke if he could see his pilot license and he replied "I have over 6000 hours, I don't have a license. I am in litigations with the FAA because they cannot make me get a license".

Mr. Ducey never asked to see the airplane logbooks.

He explained to Luke that based on his experience with tailwheel airplanes, he recommended they go to a grass field. The decision was made to go to South Lakeland airport (X49). He said that they departed Zephyrhills and had completed about 3 landings at X49 when the accident happened.

He continued by saying that when they were on final for the North runway (Luke was flying), the airplane abruptly bank to the left and nose down. When he attempted to fly the airplane, the flight controls were very stiff.

He said that the controls felt like they were locked. He continued exercising pressure over the controls until they finally started working again at about 200 feet.

He stated that he believed that Luke (who has extensive hand glider experience) was exercising opposite pressure of what required.

Mr. Ducey took full responsibility for the accident and is willing to help in the investigation.

[REDACTED]
Marilyn Santiago
ASI
[REDACTED]