



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Heidi Kemner
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

November 5, 2019

Subject: ERA20FA029
Who: Chuck Beavers – Friend of Pilot and Airport Manager

In a conversation, Mr. Beavers stated following:

- He was in his office yesterday when he heard a strange radio transmission.
- In the back of the office, the soda machine is loud so he couldn't hear it clearly.
- It only lasted about 3-4 seconds.
- It sounded like rustling pots and pans over a speaker phone.
- It was on the airport frequency, about the time of the accident, on 122.8 frequency.



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Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

November 5, 2019

Subject: ERA20FA029
Who: Jon Carleton – Friend of Pilot and Gyroplane CFI

In a conversation, Mr. Carleton stated following:

- The pilot departed the airport around 11:30 on the day of the accident. The flight test that he was doing should only have taken about 20 minutes, so when he didn't come back by noon, we went to search for him.
- He was doing a Dyno-vibration test on the gyroplane. Just fine tuning the small vibration that it had.
- He was supposed to go straight out of the airport, fly steady for a few minutes, perform the test, and then come back.
- The gyroplane had about 1.5 hrs of fuel on board prior to takeoff.
- The pilot had about 200-300 hours of flight time. He was building these machines and flying them almost every day.
- The weather conditions on the day of the accident were clear skies and calm wind.
- I watched him departed, level off, and then go out of sight.
- The aircraft cruises about 80 knots.
- I flew the accident gyroplane last week. If you took your hand of the cyclic, then it would begin a slow turn to the right.
- Prior to the accident flight, the pilot made an adjustment to the main rotor blades. If the shim was gone on one of the blades, then one blade would be out of balance and the rotor shake would be bad.
- Within the last few months, the pilot was complaining of some headaches and neck pains. They were so severe that someone asked if he should be flying within the last few weeks.

On November 6, 2019, Mr. Carleton stated:

- The pilot did a preflight on the day of the accident.
- He watched the pilot push the airplane out of the hangar and start the preflight process.
- He watched the pilot put fuel into the airplane.
- Most likely 87 autogas with ethanol.
- The pilot did check the oil on the day of the accident as well.
- The pilot didn't like getting snowmobile engines with more than 50 hours on them when he installed them on aircraft.



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

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Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

November 6, 2019

Subject: ERA20FA029
Who: Paul Vagner – Pilot's Son

In a conversation, Mr. Vagner stated following:

- When asked about any medical issues that his father might have, he mentioned that he just went through a pill box for the coroner and that he'd send over the list of medications.
- Most of the medications were for high blood pressure.
- About 3-4 days before the accident the pilot was complaining of headaches.
- About 1-1.5 months before the accident Mr. Vagner started noting that his father took more breaks in the afternoon. He would comment that he was short of breath and was finished for the day.
- About 5-6 days before the accident his father was complaining about pain in his left arm. The pain ran from his shoulder blade to his finger tips. He wasn't able to raise his arm all the way without the pain.
- Mr. Vagner asked his father to go see a doctor about these issues, but his father said it was probably a pulled muscle and other small issues and he never saw a doctor.