



## **NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD**

**Eastern Region – Ashburn, Virginia**

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### **Record of Conversation**

**Who: Captain Colby Vine**

**Date: June 09, 2020**

In a telephone conversation, Mr. Vine stated that he had known Larry Pruitt for several years and considered him to be a good friend. He was very upset about the accident. Mr. Vine conducted Mr. Pruitt's multiengine training, along with currency checks when needed. Mr. Vine was also on N135VE's insurance policy and would fly with Mr. Pruitt on business trips, and sometimes, he would fly the airplane alone. Mr. Vine said that Mr. Pruitt bought N135VE in 2016 from another person based at X60 and started training in it almost immediately. Mr. Vine estimated that Mr. Pruitt had somewhere between 400-500 hours in N135VE.

Mr. Pruitt had his own standalone hangar at X60, where he also kept his Piper Malibu and a Cessna 152. Mr. Vine described N135VE as a very straightforward airplane that had the original steam-gauge instruments in addition to a Garmin 530 and 430 installed. He said Mr. Pruitt had recently installed an ADSB transponder and upgraded to a five-bladed propeller system on each engine. The airplane was maintained at X60 by Fisher and Fisher, who were a father and son operation. Mr. Vine said the father lost his A&P certificate, so only the son did maintenance. Mr. Vine was not impressed with the Fisher's quality of work or the cleanliness of the maintenance facility. Mr. Vine said a freelance IA would sign off on the Fisher's maintenance work. Mr. Vine liked and trusted that IA, so it made him more comfortable flying the airplane after maintenance had been done.

Mr. Vine said he was not aware of any recent maintenance issues with the airplane, except the SAS (system augmentation system) had failed at one point and was later fixed. He said he never had a problem with the airplane's pressurization system.

Mr. Vine said Mr. Pruitt was all about working and running his trailer manufacturing business. He was always working and going in a different direction. Mr. Vine described him as a very healthy 68-year-old, who looked much younger than he was. He jogged, was a non-smoker, and worked out with a trainer. As a pilot, Mr. Vine said Mr. Pruitt

did not have good decision-making skills and at times would answer his cell phone while taxiing and running checklists. He also felt that Mr. Pruitt was not completely familiar with N135VE's systems after a conversation that he had with him regarding the Cheyenne accident in Los Angeles in December 2019. Mr. Vine felt that N135VE was too much airplane for Mr. Pruitt and that he would not allow one of his family members to fly with Mr. Pruitt alone unless another pilot was onboard.

Leah D. Read, Sr. ASI