



## RECORD OF CONVERSATION

**Timothy W. Monville**  
**Sr. Air Safety Investigator**  
**Eastern Region**

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**Date: December 18, 2020**  
**Person Contacted: Jason L. Sorrell**  
**NTSB Accident Number: ERA21LA080**

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### Narrative:

Mr. Jason L. Sorrell contacted NTSB by phone on December 18, 2020, at 1504 EST. He called from [REDACTED] He provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED]

He indicated that he wanted to reach out to NTSB to discuss the circumstances of the accident but he was medicated for pain and called to schedule the phone interview after he was released from the hospital, which hopefully would be this coming Sunday, or December 20, 2020.

He was asked if he could explain who was where in the airplane and the extent of their injury, if known.

Left Front Seat - Mr. Sorrell. He sustained a broken right wrist, 2<sup>nd</sup> degree burns to both arms, his left knee, face and head. A section of his right hand did contain a 2<sup>nd</sup> degree burn. He also sustained a large contusion to his right knee.

Right Front Seat – Jason Isaac (6 years old). He sustained burns but was not sure of the extent.

Left Rear Seat – Jocelyn Isaac (11 years old). She sustained burns but was not sure of the extent.

Right Rear Seat – Joseph Isaac (father of children). He sustained internal injury and burns, but he was not sure of the extent of the burns.

He was briefed that the NTSB was leading the accident investigation and was comprised of the FAA (automatically), and a representative of the airframe manufacturer. The on-scene examination was conducted and completed today. The wreckage was recovered and taken to a secure location, where, after he provides first-hand information, the engine will be examined. He asked how long the investigation would take and was told about 12 to 18 months.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on December 18, 2020. He replied on January 6, 2021, at 1309 EST, with comments that were incorporated into the narrative. The corrected digest was e-mailed to him and his attorney on February 9, 2021.



## RECORD OF CONVERSATION

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**Sr. Air Safety Investigator**  
**Eastern Region**

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**Date: May 4, 2022**  
**Person Contacted: Hollywood Aviation (Tony Fonseca)**  
**NTSB Accident Number: ERA21LA080**

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### Narrative:

The published phone number for Hollywood Aviation [REDACTED] was contacted on December 23, 2020, at 0841 EST, and a voice mail message was left asking for a return call regarding fueling of the accident airplane, N5547Y. The owner of Hollywood Aviation (Tony Fonseca) contacted NTSB the same day at 1206 EST, from [REDACTED]. He provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED].

At the start of the conversation he was advised that the NTSB is a federal agency mandated by Congress to investigate aircraft accidents, and NTSB has no authority to take any action against any individual. He was also informed that the purpose of an NTSB investigation is for safety only, and any person NTSB talks with has the right to representation; he agreed to the interview without representation.

He indicated that he did not witness the accident and he is the manager of the fuel farm. He indicated that as manager he does a daily inspection of the fuel facility, and actually takes a sample of fuel from the fuel tank, adding that there was no water in the fuel tank. He also indicated that a review of the 100's of aircraft fueled from his facility since December 7, 2020, there have been no reported fuel related issues. Further, he can produce a report from the fuel meter that provides temperature, humidity, and whether any water was present. Later that same day at 1847 EST, he provided meter print outs from December 1, 2020, through December 19, 2020<sup>1</sup>, and none of the reports showed any water.

The call end time was not recorded.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on May 4, 2022. He replied on May 11, 2022, at 1817 EDT with, "Hi Tim, This is accurate as well. Thanks, Tony." The FINAL digest was e-mailed to him on May 12, 2022.

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<sup>1</sup> Excluding December 15, 2020.



## RECORD OF CONVERSATION

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**Sr. Air Safety Investigator**  
**Eastern Region**

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**Date: February 9, 2021**  
**Person Contacted: William Ulrich**  
**NTSB Accident Number: ERA21LA080**

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### **Narrative:**

Mr. William Ulrich was contacted by phone on January 11, 2021, at 1400 EST. He was called at [REDACTED]. Also present on the call was FAA inspector Robert Perez who was called at [REDACTED]. Mr. Ulrich's e-mail address was [REDACTED].

At the beginning of the interview he was advised that the NTSB is a federal agency mandated by Congress to investigate aircraft accidents, and NTSB has no authority to take any action against any individual. He was also informed that the purpose of an NTSB investigation is for safety only, and any person NTSB talks with has the right to representation; he agreed to the interview without representation.

He indicated that he lives in Central Florida and is the Director of Operations for Van Wagner Aerial Media. He is a commercial pilot and has about 3,000 hours total flight time. He is also a certificated airframe and powerplant (A&P) mechanic, certificate number [REDACTED]. He has been an A&P mechanic since 1991. He has worked on general aviation aircraft and also for a large US based airline on transport category aircraft. In addition, he was a maintenance controller, flight mechanic, and a maintenance station supervisor. In 2006 he became the chief pilot for the banner tow company, but also performs maintenance for them. He was advised at this point of the conversation that his personal identifiable information such as phone number, e-mail address, and certificate number would be redacted.

### **He was asked the following questions by NTSB –**

Has he ever worked on the accident airplane?

No. He had never seen it before or worked on it. When he 1<sup>st</sup> saw it during the accident flight he thought it was a Piper Cherokee.

## **NTSB Questions Continued** –

Did he know or has he ever met the accident pilot before?

No.

Where was he located when he saw and heard the airplane?

He was at the banner tow company maintenance hangar which was near the approach end of runway 28L. It was a large hangar. He was at the north door working on a Piper Cub. He indicated he would pin his location and send to NTSB.

Was the airplane he was working on was the engine running or were there any aircraft nearby with engine(s) running?

No. It was fairly quiet. He only heard the engine from the accident airplane when it was departing.

Were you wearing headsets or other type devices?

No. There was no radio playing in the background. It was quiet.

Does he have any hearing issues?

No. He was working on his son's Piper Cub inside the hangar doors which were open. He was about 3 to 4 feet inside the hangar. He heard the accident airplane power up at runway 28L, and a, "definite hard miss" like it was running on 3 cylinders. He and his son looked to each other and both looked up. He saw the airplane on the runway, and he walked out of the hangar and he kept hearing the abnormal sound as the airplane travelled down the runway. He became distracted and his son did tell him that the airplane departed. His son kept watching the flight and saw it briefly airborne near the control tower. His son kept watching it. Mr. Ulrich reiterated that on throttle up for takeoff the engine was, "definitely missing." It really surprised him that the pilot elected to continue the takeoff because it sounded like the engine was not making good power. He did not hear an engine run-up. He noted that when the airplane was a couple hundred ft down the runway, he did not believe that it was accelerating normally. There was a "hard miss" which definitely could have been heard by the pilot, which got him to stand up and watch.

When did he hear the first takeoff power application?

As the airplane rolled down the runway. As the airplane was on the takeoff roll past the 1<sup>st</sup> turn off, he thought the pilot would have aborted. He added that the pilot would have had to notice the engine was not making power.

The sound that he heard could he attribute that to a specific engine issue based on his A&P experience?

He could equate that to the magnetos, a check of each cylinder compression may have been uneven and wasn't clearing up. He thought there was an issue with 1 cylinder that he surmised the pilot could have felt.

**NTSB Questions Continued** –

How long did he hear the accident airplane?

Just as it was rolling abeam the approach end of the runway. He walked out and noted the airplane was 1/2 way down the runway, and he could not hear it anymore. His son said at the time that he said the pilot was continuing, and that he climbed as high as the air traffic control tower.

How long did he hear the accident airplane for?

About 25 seconds. The entire time he heard it (about 25 seconds), the engine was running bad. He was asked to confirm the wind at the time and he said it was from the north. He did not discern an engine run-up, but if he did hear it he did not detect anything abnormal.

Did you see any smoke trailing the airplane?

No sir. He talked with his son later.

What is his son's contact?

[REDACTED]

**FAA Questions** –

What was his location?

Using Google Earth, his location at the time was 25.996134° north and -80.235200° west.

**NTSB Questions Continued** –

How far did he walk out of the hangar?

About 2 airplane lengths.

Did he see the airplane taxi?

No, not that he could recall.

Where was the wind from?

It was from the NW at 10 to 15 knots. There was a cold front coming through.

The call ended at 1428 EST.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on February 9, 2021. He replied the same day at 1334 EST with, "Hello Mr. Monville, The attached notes are correct. Thank you, William Ulrich." The final digest was e-mailed to him on February 9, 2021.



## RECORD OF CONVERSATION

**Timothy W. Monville**  
**Sr. Air Safety Investigator**  
**Eastern Region**

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**Date: February 9, 2021**  
**Person Contacted: Jason L. Sorrell**  
**NTSB Accident Number: ERA21LA080**

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### Narrative:

Mr. Sorrell and his attorney Ms. Lea Bucciero scheduled a conference call for January 13, 2021, at 0900 EST. Also present on the call was FAA inspector Robert Perez. The call was made to [REDACTED] Participant code is 209#.

At the beginning of the interview he was advised that the NTSB is a federal agency mandated by Congress to investigate aircraft accidents, and NTSB has no authority to take any action against any individual. He was also informed that the purpose of an NTSB investigation is for safety only, and any person NTSB talks with has the right to representation; he agreed to the interview with Ms. Lea Bucciero as his representative.

He was advised at the beginning of the call Mr. Sorrell was advised that he was not expected to repeat what occurred during the accident flight; rather, the conversation would clarify information not addressed in the submitted NTSB Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident/Incident Report.

He was asked if he had the weight and balance calculations performed before the flight? He indicated that the calculations were not saved, but he could re-enter the information that he did enter and could take a screen-shot and could send to NTSB. This was taken as an action item by Ms. Bucciero.

## **NTSB Questions –**

What was the fuel load?

The total capacity was 55.4 gallons of which each tank total capacity was 27.7 gallons. As part of his preflight he looked into each fuel tank and the fuel level in each tank was about 1.0 to 1.5 inches less than full. Based on his visual inspection he estimated the total capacity on-board was estimated to be about 50 gallons.<sup>1</sup>

Did he use a dipstick to determine the fuel level in each fuel tank?

No.

Did the left and right fuel quantity indicators match or agree with the level of fuel in each tank that he visually observed?

Yes. The gauges read full.

Explain the fuel selector position from engine start to accident sequence?

When he got in the airplane it was on the right tank, and it never was moved from that position at any time from his preflight to accident sequence.

Where was the rotation point on the runway?

It was about 1/2 way down the runway.

Was there any signage along the runway where the airplane became airborne?

No. Once he rotated the engine rpm was at 2,700 and he was looking forward.

What altitude were the flaps retracted?

He was already 1/2 way between the end of the runway and where he ended up when he retracted the flaps. He tried to maintain airspeed.

What was the highest altitude attained?

He did not look at the altimeter. He knew there were 5 story buildings nearby and that he could clear them. He estimated that the maximum estimated altitude was about 100 ft.

What was full engine rpm?

2,700 rpm which was achieved through run-up to takeoff power application.

Is that rpm redline?

That's full power.

What rpm was the engine at when he was trying to maintain 65 knots and avoid an aerodynamic stall?

He did not look over at the tachometer at that time.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the submitted NTSB Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident/Incident Report, the fuel load at takeoff was reported to be 48 gallons.

### **NTSB Questions Continued -**

During the takeoff roll did he hear or experience any unusual sounds?

No, nothing wrong. It sounded normal. The oil pressure and temperature were in the green arc, and so he continued the takeoff.

Does he have any sense of that the engine rpm was at after takeoff?

No. He was only guessing. He was not capable of maintaining altitude. He pushed the yoke forward to maintain 70 knots indicated airspeed. He tried to maintain 65 knots indicated airspeed. Flaps were set to takeoff for takeoff, The “flaps were slowing down too much”; therefore, he retracted them.

How was the flap position verified?

By looking out the window and at the flap indicator in the aircraft. The visual position of the flaps agreed with the flap indicator in the cockpit.

How are the passenger’s doing?

Jocelyn – She has been released from the hospital

Jason – He will be released on January 15, 2021.

Joseph – He was still in the hospital.<sup>2</sup>

### **Questions from FAA –**

What is his pilot certificate number and ratings?

His certificate number is [REDACTED] He holds a private pilot certificate with airplane single engine land and instrument airplane ratings.

What was his occupation?

Police Sergeant.

What was his relationship to the passengers?

They were his immediate neighbors.

At this time Mr. Sorrell asked about the status of his iPad. He was advised that it was shipped to the NTSB Vehicle Recorder Division for read-out.

### **Questions from NTSB –**

What were his injuries?

He sustained a broken right arm (ulna), burns on his arms, knee and head. His arms sustained 2<sup>nd</sup> degree burns.

What empty weight did he use for his weight and balance calculations?

1,649.02 pounds.

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<sup>2</sup> He died of his injuries on January 16, 2021.

**Questions from Mr. Sorrell –**

Could his address be hidden?

Yes, the house number and street name are not released. His city and state will be released.

At this point of the interview Mr. Sorrell and his attorney were given an update regarding the status of the investigation.

The following action items from Ms. Bucciero was identified:

1. Have Mr. Sorrell provide screen shot of weight and balance for numbers he used for his weight and balance.

The call ended at 0932 EST.

The digest was e-mailed to him and his attorney for review on February 9, 2021. He replied on February 10, 2021, at 0807 EST with, "Good morning Mr. Monville, I have reviewed the interview notes from our conversation. I have no corrections or changes. Regards, Jason Sorrell." The corrected digest was e-mailed to him and his attorney on February 10, 2021.



## RECORD OF CONVERSATION

**Timothy W. Monville**  
**Sr. Air Safety Investigator**  
**Eastern Region**

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**Date: February 9, 2021**  
**Person Contacted: Tyler Ulrich**  
**NTSB Accident Number: ERA21LA080**

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### Narrative:

Mr. Tyler Ulrich was contacted by phone on February 9, 2021, at 0906 EST. He was called at [REDACTED] and left a voice mail message. He returned the phone call the same day at 0915 from the same phone number. Mr. Ulrich's e-mail address was [REDACTED]

At the beginning of the interview he was advised that the NTSB is a federal agency mandated by Congress to investigate aircraft accidents, and NTSB has no authority to take any action against any individual. He was also informed that the purpose of an NTSB investigation is for safety only, and any person NTSB talks with has the right to representation; he agreed to the interview without representation.

He indicated that he is a commercial pilot and his total time is about 3,500 hours total time., His certificate number is [REDACTED] He is not an airframe and powerplant mechanic.

On the date and time of the accident he was at the Van Wagner maintenance hangar which was about 300 to 400 ft from the approach end of runway 28L. He did not see or hear the engine run-up. The airplane which he had not seen before caught his eye. He clarified that he could not hear the run-up. He and his father heard the engine of the accident airplane when full power was applied for the takeoff. They heard "popping and banging" from the engine the whole time he saw the airplane which continued to the point when it was about 1/2 way down the runway. It became airborne when the flight was abeam the intersection of runway 28L and runway 1R.<sup>1</sup> The popping and backfiring continued as the airplane became airborne never climbing above the control tower. He added that the engine problem, "never cleared itself." The popping continued from full power application to when he lost visual sight of the airplane.

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<sup>1</sup> Using Google Earth that location was about 1,542 ft down the runway.

He was asked the following questions –

Did he have any thoughts about the popping sound?

Not really. This one compared to others he had heard sounded amplified, like “seriously something up.” He thought the pilot could have heard it from the cockpit adding that it was enough to get their attention and for them to turn around and watch. The airplane climbed to between 50 and 100 ft, then descended, then began to climb, adding that the climb was not steady. He confirmed the airplane climbed no higher than the height of the control tower. Both he and his father turned around. He (Tyler) was outside the hangar and watched in “disbelief.”

Did he expect the pilot to abort?

Yes. There would have been enough information (sound or feel) to clearly tell something was wrong. If the pilot couldn’t have heard it he should have been able to feel it.

Had he ever flown that make and model airplane before?

No. That is what caught his eye. It was the 1<sup>st</sup> time that he had ever seen that type of airplane.

Did he ever during his pilot time, experience an engine issue during takeoff?

Yes. He had experienced a bad cylinder, or a magneto issue. And he had also experienced carburetor ice. But in those instances, he would take the airplane to the maintenance place for examination.

Did he feel the engine issue could have been a stuck valve?

It could have been.

The call ended at 0925 EST.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on February 9, 2021. He replied the same day at 1550 EST with, “Good afternoon, That all look[s] correct. Thank you Tyler U.” The FINAL digest was e-mailed to him on February 9, 2021.



## RECORD OF CONVERSATION

**Timothy W. Monville**  
**Sr. Air Safety Investigator**  
**Eastern Region**

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**Date: May 11, 2022**  
**Person Contacted: Tony Fonseca**  
**NTSB Accident Number: ERA21LA080**

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### Narrative:

Mr. Tony Fonseca of Hollywood Aviation was contacted by phone on May 4, 2022, at 1557 EDT. He was called at [REDACTED]

He indicated that he did receive my emails. He was asked the following questions –

How does the system determine whether water is present in the tank?

There is a sensor in the bottom of the fuel tank. Should there be water present, the system is designed to set off an alarm. Additionally, the pickup point where fuel is drawn from the tank is off the bottom which results in 250 gallons of unusable fuel in the 10,000 gallons tank. He has never had any water in his tank, which is above ground.

He never lets the fuel level go below 2,000 gallons.

How do you know if the sensor is functional?

The probe which is very long and hangs from the top of the fuel tank is tested.

How often is it tested?

Once a year or every two years. If the probe is not functional it sets off an alarm inside the office in the Veeder Root System.

The call end time was 1613 EDT.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on May 11, 2022. He replied the same day at 1814 EDT with, "Hi Tim, Your notes regarding the fuel tank are accurate. Thanks, Tony." The FINAL digest was e-mailed to him on May 12, 2022.