



NTSB MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

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Eastern Region, Office of Aviation Safety (ERA)
National Transportation Safety Board

Date: 5/21/2022, 5/24/2022, 5/26/2022
Person Contacted: Kevin Quinn (STOL Drag LLC.)
NTSB Accident Number: ERA22FA233

Narrative:

Mr. Kevin Quinn, Kyle Bushman, and John Walker with STOL Drag LLC. met with the NTSB investigator-in-Charge at the Wayne, Nebraska airport conference room. Also present was Henry Soderlund, Textron Aviation, and the FAA Inspectors Ronald Doug Killingsworth (FAA IIC for the event) and FAA Inspectors Mark Gaffney and Chris Chambers. The following is a summary of what was stated to the NTSB investigator.

This NTSB investigator requested that Mr. Quinn, Mr. Bushman, and Mr. Walker provide written statements pertaining to the circumstances surrounding the accident flight. Mr. Quinn stated that he wanted to keep his employees names out of the investigation and he would not permit them to provide statements to the NTSB.

This NTSB investigator stated to Mr. Quinn that the NTSB cannot provide any assurances to individuals that information they provide to the NTSB will not become public. It was stated that written statements and record of conversations are placed in the NTSB public docket.

Mr. Quinn stated that he and his organization support aviation safety. Mr. Quinn stated that he was being advised by an attorney and he did not need to provide anything further than the written statement he provided to the FAA. He stated that he wrote a statement and provided it to the FAA, however, he did not place his name below the statement, but wrote STOL Drag LLC.¹

Mr. Quinn stated that he believed the FAA needed to require spin training for pilots in general aviation.

¹ This statement was provided to the NTSB by the FAA Inspector and is on file.



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Mr. Quinn was informed by this investigator that he as an eyewitness has information that is critically important to the basic facts of the investigation. Mr. Quinn stated that he would be willing to support the investigation if this investigator had more questions in the coming weeks and months.

Mr. Quinn reported the following details during a question and answer with this NTSB Investigator:

- He did not hear any radio calls from the accident pilot. Mr. Quinn was transmitting on frequency 121.05 to the heat of 5 aircraft that were performing traditional STOL practice.
- Immediately prior to the accident, he noticed that the accident aircraft was slow and he turned toward final approach early.
- While the accident aircraft was on final approach, he stated "Tom get that nose down" over the radio.
- He could not attribute any engine noise coming from the accident aircraft due to his distance and proximity to other aircraft landing.
- The accident approach was the third lap of the total of three landings planned for this heat of aircraft.
- He stated that it was not common for the ground controller to issue go-around instructions to aircraft flying.
- He stated that the spacing was adequate between the aircraft.
- He stated that it was his impression that if he did not help coordinate the heats of aircraft, all of the pilot's would have attempted to fly at the same time once the airport opened. He stated that the pilot's wanted to fly the traditional STOL heats due to the wind preventing their Drag STOL flight operations.

Mr. Quinn called this investigator on May 24, 2022, following a NTSB request for information email that was sent to him. The following is a summary of what was discussed.

- In response to this investigator's email requesting documentation and details surrounding the STOL Drag event, Mr. Quinn stated that "I'm not going to submit that stuff." He stated that "this has nothing to do with STOL Drag."
- He stated he told the pilot's competing in the STOL Drag event that "STOL Drag is done for the day" prior to the initiation of traditional STOL.
- He believed that there was one group of aircraft remaining to conduct a traditional STOL heat. Due to the NOTAM expiring at 7:00PM, that final group



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was only going to get one landing. Mr. Quinn was informed by Mr. John Walker that, "Ronald² said you can't go past 7:00PM." Mr. Walker was the STOL drag representative that communicated with Ronald during this instance.

- He was asked whether shoulder harnesses were required to compete in STOL Drag LLC. events. He stated that they were not. This investigator suggested that shoulder harnesses should be required. He stated "we should change that."
- He was asked how pilot's receive authorization to compete in STOL Drag. He stated that "I sign off all the guys myself" after they complete the STOL Drag training.
- He stated that traditional STOL, versus Drag STOL, was never planned for the weekend. It was "never a plan." It is not common for traditional STOL to happen at STOL Drag events.
- Mr. Quinn reported that about 4:30PM or 5:00PM there was an unscheduled pilot safety briefing. He said they "had the time slot" and they could not do STOL Drag qualifications as planned due to the wind.
- Several pilots asked, "can we still go fly?" Mr. Quinn stated that he informed the pilots "we are done for the day."
- Mr. Quinn stated, "they are going to fly regardless."
- Mr. Quinn stated "The people can still see something" with regard to keeping airplanes flying during the event.
- Mr. Quinn stated that he asked someone to "get him a piece of paper" so that airplane groups could be organized. He asked for the pilot's names and an aircraft listing. He put 4 groups of 5 airplanes together.
- Mr. Quinn stated that "Tom" [the accident pilot] was the "tail" of the heat.
- Mr. Quinn stated that the accident pilot had made two STOL landings prior to the accident approach.
- Mr. Quinn stated that, "I hate these slow flight maneuvers." He asked the question of "when did traditional STOL become slow flight" and described those pilots often approach the landing area in a slow flight maneuver, which he did not favor.
- Mr. Quinn stated that "generic measurements" were being taken during the accident traditional STOL heat.

² Ronald (Doug) Killingsworth was the FAA Inspector-in-Charge of the Mayday Drag STOL event.



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- He was asked whether traditional STOL had been performed earlier in the event or was planned to be conducted later in the event. He stated that "100% not. Traditional STOL was not planned."
- He stated that he told the pilot's "Drag is done."
- He was asked to characterize what the FAA Inspectors on-site stated to him prior to the initiation of the traditional STOL.
- Mr. Quinn stated that he discussed the unscheduled traditional STOL intention with the FAA IIC, Ronald (Doug) Killingsworth.
- Mr. Quinn stated that he asked Inspector Killingsworth, "Ronald are we good with this?"
- According to Mr. Quinn, Inspector Killingsworth told Mr. Quinn that "the waiver and the NOTAM is protecting you guys. Yeah go fly".
- He stated that Inspector Killingsworth stated "I don't have problem with that". when he was asked whether traditional STOL heats could be flown. Mr. Quinn stated that Inspectors Mark Gaffney and Chris Chambers were all present during this interaction and the subsequent pilot safety briefing.
- Mr. Quinn explained that Inspector Killingsworth was not going to permit the traditional STOL to continue beyond 7:00PM, which was when the airport closed NOTAM was set to expire.
- Mr. Quinn stated that, "we were doing what we were supposed to be doing. STOL was done for the day."
- Mr. Quinn stated that "you know how I feel about traditional STOL."
- Mr. Quinn stated that he told the pilot group "you do not have to fly" and "It was a volunteer basis".
- Mr. Quinn stated that the accident pilot had competed in the "High Sierra" STOL Drag event and had been signed off for STOL Drag at the prior event. He did not receive a new authorization for the Wayne, NE event.
- Mr. Quinn was asked whether he planned to complete traditional STOL at future events. He stated that he would not be.
- Mr. Quinn was told by this Investigator that it is his view that you should "Fly what you brief" and the waiver did not allow for traditional STOL operations, so in the future, what is authorized in the waiver should be the only activities performed during STOL Drag events.
- This Investigator informed Mr. Quinn that an updated list of questions and request for documentation would be sent to him via email.



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The following email memorandum was provided by Mr. Kevin Quinn in response to questions asked by this investigator:

Hello Adam-

I just sent you all of the Pilot and Aircraft documents that Mr Dafoe sent in prior to his arrival in Wayne NE. Attached here is the STOL Drag Events LLC accreditation letter, Tom Dafoe's certified STOL Drag pilot letter, and the FAA / STOL Drag Events Checklist for Airmen and Aircraft. You utilize the term "Traditional STOL" and "Heats" as if this was a sanctioned event. Per my statement and along with all witness accounts including the FAA on site and the Airport authority, this was not sanctioned. It was a purely voluntary with permission from the FAA and Airport authority on site. The flying was at the pilots free will to go fly and practice short and soft field landings and approved from the agencies listed above. Nothing more. STOL Drag Events LLC., operates under strict guidance from the FAA. **THIS WAS NOT A STOL CONTEST.** Contests include prizes, scoring etc. There was none of that. There was zero participation from STOL Drag Events LLC. All STOL Drag Events were called off for the day due to the given weather elements exceeding our crosswind and tail wind limitations set forth per our National Accreditation.

Below I will answer your questions in **BOLD**.

Sincerely,
Kevin Quinn
President
STOL Drag Events LLC

Hello Mr. Quinn,

The NTSB is close to wrapping up our on-scene portion of the investigation, as I mentioned at the airport, I am the NTSB Investigator-in-Charge for the accident and the NTSB is leading the safety investigation. I have the following questions I need addressed, please see the below list. I understand that an attorney may be advising you. Please let me know if myself or the NTSB General Counsel can answer any questions you or your attorney may have pertaining to our investigation and how we can proceed forward with your responses.

*******Questions*******

1. What is your position with STOL Drag LLC.?



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PRESIDENT - CFI TRAINER FOR ALL STOL DRAG Events LLC PILOTS

1. Please provide the 'STOL Drag Tech Inspection' form for Mr. Dafoe's aircraft (N76075). (The FAA does not have this documentation).

MR. DAFOE NOR ANY OF THE CERTIFIED PILOTS PARTICIPATING HAD NOT YET PARTICIPATED IN ANY QUALIFICATIONS OR RACING. TECH INSPECTIONS WERE SCHEDULED FOR THE NEXT MORNING PRIOR TO ACTUAL QUALIFICATION RUNS AND RACING. STOL Drag Events to this point had only offered its training course to new pilots.

2. Please provide the '2022 STOL Drag Event – Required Pilot and Aircraft Documents', signed by Mr. Dafoe. (The FAA does not have this documentation).

ATTACHED

3. Please provide any Standard Operating Procedures/ Practices documents that STOL Drag utilizes to conduct Traditional and Drag STOL competition.

THIS WAS NOT A STOL DRAG EVENT. ALL ACTIVITIES WERE CANCELED FOR THE DAY. THIS WAS NOT A STOL DRAG EVENT.

4. Please provide the aircraft registration numbers for the 4 other aircraft that were flying in the traditional STOL heat being flown at the time of the accident, and please specify which aircraft Mr. Dafoe was following.

THIS WAS NOT A FORMAL ORGANIZED EVENT. PILOTS FLEW ON THEIR OWN WILL AND WERE ALSO BRIEFED ON SUCH, THAT THEY COULD FLY AT THEIR OWN RISK. NOTHING WAS SANCTIONED WITH THIS ACTIVITY AND WE WERE GUIDED FROM THE FAA ON LOCATION

5. Please provide the name/ contact information for the pilot that Mr. Dafoe was following in the accident heat.

JON HAKALA [REDACTED]

6. Did Mr. Dafoe possess a 'current race pilot authorization'? Please provide documentation and a description of how and when this was obtained.

ATTACHED - OCTOBER OF 2021



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7. What other competitions has Mr. Dafoe competed in that were being organized by STOL Drag. When and where were these events that he competed in. Describe the type of competition he may have attended.

HIGH SIERRA FLY-IN OCTOBER 2021. MR. DAFOE HAS ALSO BEEN A MEMBER OF OUR GROUND CREW AT LOCATIONS THAT INCLUDE RENO AIR RACES 2021, COPPER STATE FLY-IN 2022

8. Describe the ground and/ or flight training that Mr. Dafoe attended after his arrival in Wayne, NE. Who performed this training?

TOM IS A CERTIFIED STOL DRAG PILOT. CERTIFIED PILOTS CAN PRACTICE ON THEIR OWN ANYTIME, ANYWHERE. QUALIFICATIONS WERE CANCELED DUE TO WINDS AND THERE WAS NO QUALIFICATIONS OR COMPETITION SCHEDULED UNTIL THE FOLLOWING DAY.

9. Are shoulder harnesses required by STOL Drag to participate in your events?

NO, BUT THEY WILL BE GOING FORWARD

10. Are flight helmets required to participate in STOL Drag events?

YES

11. Were traditional STOL heats conducted prior to the accident involved heats, or were the heats being flown at the time of the accident, the first time during the event that traditional STOL heats were being flown to runway 31?

THE PILOTS GATHERED FOR INFORMAL SHORT LANDING AND TAKE OFF PRACTICE. THERE WERE 2 GROUPS OF 5 THAT FLEW A 3 LAP PATTERN PRIOR TO TOMS GROUP. TOM WAS IN GROUP 3. GROUP 4 DID NOT FLY

12. On May 20th, the accident pilot attended a 'Participant Safety Briefing' and signed the signee page. What was discussed during this initial safety meeting? Was traditional STOL operations on runway 31 discussed during this safety meeting?

THE BRIEFING DESCRIBED HERE ABOVE WAS FOR THE NEW UNCERTIFIED PILOTS FOR THE MORNING FLIGHTS. I BELIEVE TOM DID NOT FLY IN THE MORNING HOWEVER COULD HAVE GONE FLYING ON HIS OWN AND



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PRACTICED ON HIS OWN. CERTIFIED PILOTS ARE NOT PART OF THE NEW PILOT TRAINING TO BE CERTIFIED. ANOTHER BRIEF WAS SCHEDULED LATER IN THE DAY FOR THE 5-7PM NOTAMED FLIGHT TIME THAT WAS CANCELED DUE TO WINDY CONDITIONS EXCEEDING STOL DRAGS LIMITATIONS FOR CROSS WINDS.

13. Was traditional STOL competition planned during the Wayne, NE event? If so, was Mr. Dafoe planning to compete and/ or did he qualify to compete in the traditional STOL conducted previously during the event?

IT WAS DISCUSSED HOWEVER STOL DRAG EVENTS LLC., DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN SUCH. THIS WAS NOT A COMPETITION. THIS WAS PURLEY A VOLUNTARY FLIGHT BY THE PILOTS TO DO SHORT AND SOFT FIELD LANDING PRACTICE. NOTHING MORE

14. Was a second safety briefing held prior to the initiation of the traditional STOL heats being conducted at the time of the accident?

YES, WITH THE AIRPORT AUTHORITY AND 3 FAA PERSONS ALONG WITH ALL PILOTS AND MEDIA AND CREW IN ATTENDANCE. WE OPERATED UNDER THEIR STRICT GUIDANCE AND APPROVAL

15. Who spoke during this meeting?

KEVIN QUINN PRESIDENT STOL DRAG EVENTS LLC. AND RONALD KILLINGSWORTH FAA LINCOLN FSDO

16. Did the FAA provide an approval to conduct the traditional STOL heats being flown? YES If so, how was this approval given to you?

I LOOKED DIRECTLY IN THE EYE OF ALL THREE OF THE FAA MEMBERS (INCLUDING RONALD KILLINGSWORTH) ATTENDING ALONG WITH THE AIRPORT AUTHORITY AND ALL NODDED AND SAID A VERBAL YES, THAT IT WAS OK. WE DISCUSSED THE NOTAMED RUNWAY, TRAFFIC PATTERNS, COMMUNICATIONS ON 121.5 AND WE WOULD MONITOR THE LOCAL UNICOM, THE WAIVER TIME AND THE FACT THAT IT WAS A VOLUNTARY FLIGHT AND IT WAS NOT A SANCTIONED STOL DRAG EVENT HOWEVER, FOR SAFETY WE WOULD VOLUNTEER OUR HELP TO LAUNCH AIRCRAFT IN GROUPS OF 5 (NORMAL OPS) IN ORDER TO KEEP 30 PILOTS FROM FLYING IN THE PATTERN AT ONCE.



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17. Who with STOL Drag authorized the traditional STOL heats to initiate during the certificate of waiver period?

KEVIN QUINN MYSELF ALONG WITH THE 3 MEMBERS OF THE FAA AND THE WAYNE AIRPORT AUTHORITY

18. How many traditional STOL heats were planned near the time of the accident. It's understood that 5 aircraft in total were a part of the accident-related heat. How many other aircraft and heats were planned for May 20th if the accident did not occur?

4 GROUPS OF 5. THIS WAS GROUP 3 AND TOM WAS THE LAST PILOT IN GROUP 3 ON HIS SECOND LAP.

19. How was the number and order of aircraft established?

PILOTS PUT THIS TOGETHER AS THEY TAXIED OUT IN GROUPS OF 5 AIRCRAFT. IT WAS PURLEY VOLUNTARY

20. Was the airport NOTAM'd closed at the time of the traditional STOL heats being flown?

YOU KEEP MENTIONING HEATS AS IF THIS WAS OFFICIAL. YES THE AIRPORT WAS NOTAMED SEE ABOVE FOR COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE FAA AND AIRPORT AUTHORITY. IT WAS A CONCERN OF STOL DRAG EVENTS AND APPROVED BY BOTH PARTIES ABOVE.

21. When were STOL Drag flight operations planned to end on May 20th?

NO, QUALIFICATIONS AND RACING OPS WERE SCHEDULED TO START THE MORNING OF THE 21ST WITH A ROLL OVER IN THE EVENT OF WEATHER FOR THE 22ND. OPS FOR THE 20TH WE CANCELED DUE TO WEATHER CONDITIONS EXCEEDING OUR CROSSWIND / TAIL WIND TOLERANCES

22. Were the pilot's instructed to tune to 121.05 during the heat?

YES

23. Who was communicating on frequency 121.05?

ALL PILOTS, MYSELF AND ANY CREW THAT NEEDED COMMS. THE. AIRPORT MONITERED THE LOCAL UNICOM



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24. Describe what was being communicated on 121.05 to the pilots in the few minutes and immediately prior to the accident.

THERE WAS NO CHATTER WHAT SO EVER. 45 SECONDS PRIOR TO TOMS ACCIDENT I NOTICED TOM WAS SLOW AND I SAID OVER THE RADIO "TOM LOWER YOUR NOSE, YOU LOOK SLOW". 15 SECONDS PRIOR I GAVE ANOTHER "TOM LOWER YOUR NOSE". WE WATCHED EVENTS TRANSPIRE. SOMEONE ON THE RADIO CALLED OUT A MAYDAY IMIEDIATLY AFTER THE CRASH. CONCERNED WITH THE LANDING AIRCRAFT ON SHORT FINAL, I THEN TOLD THE LANDING AIRCRAFT WITH PILOT JON HAKALA (LISTED ABOVE WITH CONTACT) ON SHORT FINAL TO "TAKE THIER TIME, LAND THE AIRCRAFT , YOU ARE FINE".

25. Did Mr. Dafoe communicate over the radio at any time during the heat?

NO

26. Were the pilot's informed that their STOL performance would be measured for the accident related heats? (i.e., were measurements being taken of the takeoff and landing distances?).

THERE WERE A FEW OF THE PILOTS THAT ELECTED TO NOT PARTICIPATE VOLUNTEERING ALONG WITH AIRPORT VOLUNTEERS AND SUCH TAKING GENERIC MEASUREMENTS BUT NOTHING WAS OFFICAL. OPTICS ARE HUGE HERE AS WE HAD SO MANY FOLKS WITH THE MEDIA IN YELLOW VESTS TRYING TO CAPUTRE ANYTHING THEY COULD THIS DAY GIVEN THE EVENT THEY CAME FOR WAS CANCELED.

27. About how many spectators were present for the traditional STOL heats being performed at the time of the accident?

PURELY GUESSING MAYBE A COUPLE HUNDRED

28. Did spectators pay to enter the event on Friday May 20?

THATS AN EVENT QUESTION FOR THE AIRPORT. I AM NOT AWARE OF WHAT SPECTATORS PAID OR IF THEY DID OR NOT FOR THE EVENT.

29. How far were the spectators partitioned from the runway operations?



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91.119 EXCEPT WHEN TAKING OFF OR LANDING.

30. What provisions within the FAA Certificate of Waiver permits traditional STOL heats/ operations? Please provide the applicable paragraphs and sections.

**THIS WAS NOT A SANCTIONED TRADITIONAL STOL EVENT. IT WAS PURLEY
VOLUNTARY FLYING FOR SHORT FIELD AND SOFT FIELD LANDING PRACTICE**

#END#