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Senior Aviation Accident Investigator
Office of Aviation Safety, Eastern Region

Date: June 7, 2023

Subject: NTSB# ERA23FA256

Contact: Mr. John Rumpel, Mrs. Barbara Rumpel (Parents of Onboard Victim,
Airplane Owners)

Mr. John Rumpel and Mrs. Barbara Rumpel were contacted via telephone by the NTSB Investigator-in-Charge for the investigation involving N611VG. Also present for the call was Mr. Mitch Mitchell with the FAA. They were informed that the purpose of the call was in support of the NTSB safety accident investigation and the fact-finding process. He was informed that the call was not being recorded, and a summary record of conversation would be produced for the report. The following record is a summary of the conversation.

- The Rumpel's reported that the accident pilot (Mr. Jeff Hefner) was a long-time friend of the family. Mr. Hefner managed their airplanes over the years, including the accident airplane.
- They reported that the accident pilot picked up the three passengers that were ultimately on-board the accident flight in Islip, NY and flew them to Elizabethton, TN, on the Thursday before the accident day on Sunday.
- The Rumpel's reported that the airplane then flew down to West Palm Beach later in the day. They were informed by the accident pilot that there was a problem with the newly installed avionics. They understood that there was a cooling fan issue. After the airplane would fly for a few hours, the avionics would go out (shut off) and they understood that the radios went out intermittent.
- The Rumpel's reported that they dropped off the three passengers on Sunday at Elizabethton, TN for the accident flight. They described that their interaction

with the accident pilot was normal and routine. They told him to be safe and he said "I always am."

- The Rumpel's reported that they observed the accident airplane takeoff. It was a normal takeoff in their view.
- The Rumpel's reported that it was their recollection that shortly after takeoff, someone from the FAA called Mrs. Rumpel's phone, asking how they might be able to reach the aircraft. There was no means to reach the aircraft from the internet or a cell phone.
- The Rumpel's reported that the airplane was recently purchased in Daytona Beach, Florida, from a Dave Harris.
- The Rumpel's reported several contacts that might be of assistance to the investigation.

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