

Gunther Todd

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, June 6, 2023 2:44 PM
To: Gunther Todd; Torrent, Michael H (FAA)
Cc: Bob Benyo
Subject: FW: N454AB

[CAUTION] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click any links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

All, please see the email below containing a statement from Daniel Hill regarding the 5/25/23 accident.

Sincerely,

Milo

From: Adam Dalke [REDACTED]
Date: Tuesday, June 6, 2023 at 12:58 PM
To: Milota Srkal [REDACTED]
Subject: Fwd: N454AB

----- Original Message -----
From: Daniel Hill [REDACTED]
To: Adam Dalke [REDACTED]
Date: 06/06/2023 11:37 AM EDT
Subject: N454AB

Here is a statement describing what I observed on May 25, 2023.

At the time leading up to the accident, I was in the banner box flying 337AB and 454AB was in the box aswell. I observed 454AB attempt to pick from his poles and missed a few times / knocked the rope off the poles atleast once. On about his 4th attempt I had gotten my banner and was departing the banner box to the southeast. I stayed on company frequency and heard 454AB call "454 FInal" immediatly after charles called to "go around, i'm gonna give you Strawberry Moon, im gunna give you cronks banner" (Cronk was unable to takeoff with us to do his banner due to a flat tire.) 454 acknowledged the call and charles then said "its a big banner (letter banner) so if you pick and cannot climb well, just stay/climb in the box". From here 454AB appeared to be just staying at 400 feet until given the poles for the pick. (I did not observe this but this is what I assumed based on the communications). All of the sudden at about the time he was east of the banner field I hear 454 call out "I LOST MY RUDDER!!!" and immediatly Charles calling out "Where are you going?!". Tower then called out "All aircraft this will be a full stop landing!" Company radio silence followed.

Daniel Hill

Michael H. Torrent
Aviation Safety Inspector
South Florida FSDO (SO19)

Date: June 5, 2023

Subject: N454AB / Record of Conversation - Interview

Contact: Roland Schuth – A&P Mechanic – Aerial Banners North

Roland Schuth was contacted by phone on June 5, 2023, at 1814 EST, conversation lasted approximately 40 mins. He was called at [REDACTED]

I contacted Mr. Schuth to interview him on what he may know about N454AB, the accident aircraft. Mr. Schuth was employed by Aerial Banners North at the time of the accident on 05/25/2023.

He advised he is the only A&P on the floor at the company.

N454AB was a “good machine” and had been flying ok prior to the accident. He discussed his personal flying experience and was trying to comprehend what may have happened.

He advised that he heard on the shop floor that the aircraft knocked over a cone and broke a stick in the banner pick up area on the missed pick right before the accident, may have dragged the hook of struck the tail.

We discussed that hook and line, he advised it should be a polypropylene rope and should come off around 200 lbs of load. The hook to his knowledge should be made of 3/8” bar stock and is malleable with a soft mallet, should not be hard to form over the a work bench.

Mr. Schuth advised during this conversation that he has been fired from the company. When I asked why he wasn’t brought into the discussion for input he advised that “you can’t tell Bob (Benyo) anything, he knows everything and is accountable for nothing”. He mentioned he had been asking Bob for more help in the maintenance department, he had been working 7 days a week or about 70 hours a week. He also mentioned “he should have grounded all the aircraft and fixed all the issues”.

When Mr. Schuth was asked how long he has worked there, he answered since mid- march, “no more than 10 to 12 weeks”. He went on to say “if the books are messed up, it wasn’t him, he hasn’t been there long” referring to the aircraft maintenance logs.

Mr. Schuth called back at approximately 7:03pm for a brief conversation, he said dragging the hook or knocking over a cone is unusual and does not normally happen.

-----end-----

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Witness statement banner tow plane crash KHWO, 5/25/2023
Date: Friday, May 26, 2023 1:26:29 AM

Banner tow plane crash, KHWO May 25, 2023

I was driving north on University Drive, having just turned off from driving northbound on the airport perimeter road (at West Airport Road). I saw the Pawnee (going eastbound) cross in front of the car at an appropriate altitude, airspeed and attitude for an attempted banner pickup. The descent to the pickup appeared normal; the plane did not catch the line to pick up the banner. The plane initiated a climb which appeared normal, but then immediately turned to the left (north) – this turn occurred at about 40'. The plane continued a climbing turn to the left and leveled the wings and attitude at about 75', heading approximately WNW. At that point it appeared that the plane would continue westbound to try again. The plane's airspeed was a bit more than the car's speed (30 mph), so maybe around 40-45 mph. Almost immediately, the left wing dropped and the plane entered a spin to the left. It appeared to execute about 1/2 to 3/4 of a rotation before impacting the ground at a shallow nose down attitude, without much forward velocity. It took less than 2 seconds to impact the ground; the total time from starting the climb to impact was probably more than 5 seconds and less than 8 seconds.

David S. Kayden, MD
ASEL, Commercial, Instrument, IGI, ~3000 hrs
[REDACTED]

(Sorry about the previous attachment... I'm not sure what went wrong.)

On Thursday, May 25, 2023, 08:39:31 PM EDT, Torrent, Michael H (FAA) [REDACTED] > wrote:

Dr. Kayden,

Not sure if it's the same statement but the first email attachment wont open. Would it be possible to resend?

Respectfully,

Michael H. Torrent
Aviation Safety Inspector

FAA Logo



South Florida FSDO (SO19)

[REDACTED]
Miramar, Florida 33027



From: David Kayden [REDACTED]

Sent: Thursday, May 25, 2023 7:05 PM

To: Torrent, Michael H (FAA) [REDACTED]

Subject: Witness statement banner tow plane crash KHOW, 5/25/2023

Accident of Banner Tow Plane at North Perry Airport

May 25, 2023

I witnessed the unfortunate plane crash earlier today from very close range (about 1000 ft.) I was in the passenger seat of our car as my husband David Kayden, MD drove north on University Drive alongside North Perry Airport. As we approached the banner tow pickup area, we saw the Pawnee tow plane come in to pick up a banner. As we watched, the plane dived with the grappling hook out behind it for a normal-looking pick-up heading east. The hook failed to grab the rope attached to the banner, and then the plane pitched up to about 50 ft. altitude and then started a steep banking climbing turn to the left. It ending up wings level flying westbound at about 200 ft. altitude, and very clearly in our view through the windshield and side window as the plane approached our car. Moments later the left wing suddenly dropped and the plane pitched nose down, rotating to the left in a spin. It rotated 180 degrees and impacted the ground while almost horizontal yet about 20 degrees nose down.

My husband and I are both pilots, with commercial and instrument ratings and several thousands of flying hours. I have 200+ hours experience flying banner tows 20 years ago in a different location and different type aircraft. Both my husband and I have watched many times while banners were picked up and towed at North Perry Airport.

Debra E. Young

AMEL, Commercial pilot certificate [REDACTED] AGI, former CFI, CFIG

Gunther Todd

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, June 1, 2023 3:31 PM
To: Torrent, Michael H (FAA); [REDACTED]
Subject: Aerial Banner

Michael

It was a pleasure to meet you yesterday.

As requested, I am providing my observations from May 25, 2023 in regards to CPL Assem Ashaat.

Background

Mr. Ashaat received his 61.31(i) Tailwheel Endorsement from my company in June 2021.

In March 2023, I performed a BFR with Mr. Ashaat. During the BFR oral process, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Mr. Ashaat indicated he was working very long hours outside of flying as an UBER driver. I advised him about pilot fatigue and what can happen to a pilot who does not get the proper rest.

The morning of May 25, 2023 I sat next to Mr. Ashaat on the FBO patio. The time was approximately 10:30-11am. Aerial Banner Pilot Jon Cronk was preflighting his assigned aircraft in front of Mr. Ashaat and myself. Mr. Cronk approached Mr. Ashaat and myself and said, "Assem, you are always here before me. Long before you actually have to be here." Mr. Ashat responded, "I like to do that. I got here today at 9:30am even though I got home this morning at 3am."

I left the facility before Mr. Ashat headed to his assigned aircraft. I learned about the accident through a third party moments after it happened.

Should you need any additional assistance or questions about my statement, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best Regards,

Jay Schwartz, President/COO
Blue Sky Aviation USA
[REDACTED]

Gunther Todd

From: Ranko Arsic [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, May 25, 2023 8:41 PM
To: Torrent, Michael H (FAA)
Subject: Re: Banner Tow Accident

Have close look at engine.....I think that is a cause of this crash... I don't remember hearing engine rev up after miss.
On Thu, May 25, 2023 at 20:36 Torrent, Michael H (FAA) [REDACTED] wrote:

Thank you sir. Every little bit helps on something like this.

Take care, good night.

Michael H. Torrent

Aviation Safety Inspector



South Florida FSDO (S019)

[REDACTED]

[Miramar, Florida 33027](#)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Ranko Arsic [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, May 25, 2023 8:35 PM
To: Torrent, Michael H (FAA) [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Banner Tow Accident

I saw banner tow airplane missing pick and abruptly pulled nose up to 65-70ft followed by extremely banking airplane to the left in excess of 70 degrees or more, at that point aircraft stalled and dropped nose down with almost no forward movement. Aircraft come to arrest no more than 150-200 yards north east from pickup point.

On Thu, May 25, 2023 at 19:56 Torrent, Michael H (FAA) [REDACTED] wrote:

Good Evening Ranko,

I understand you were around the field today and may have witnessed the banner tow accident at HWO.

If you could send me a statement and/or call me I would greatly appreciate it. Your perspective may shed light on the root cause.

Thanks,

Michael Torrent
[REDACTED]

Thursday, June 1st, 2023

Charles Ziade



On Thursday May 25th, 2023, Ashat Ahmed Assem (pilot) took off from Runway 10L at HWO around 11:55 for a scheduled 12 o'clock banner. He did a first pass in the banner box for hook deployment and verification of that hook. He flew at proper airspeed and altitude (our parameters are 95MPH, 400 feet in the banner box). Everything was normal from my standpoint.

He did miss on his first 3 attempts (which happens often enough for banner operations). All seemed normal (airspeed & altitude) but he was making his crosswind turns earlier than he is supposed to, which is Delta taxiway.

There was a change for his scheduled banner and needed to assign him another banner to fly which was already set up and ready for him.

I relayed that information to him via radio and told him to go around and fly his approach on a different lane than the previous one that was assigned to him. All seemed fine and normal, airspeed & altitude.

He proceeded to his approach to pick the banner and missed again, he did hit the right cone of the lane with the hook on the climb. I was a couple of feet from his lane, where I usually stand, and advised him as usual that he missed his attempt to pick that banner. I took a couple of steps towards his pick lane to fix it, and as I turned to watch him, I observed him at around 100 feet in a "spin" towards the ground where he crashed.

I went to the plane right away, he was conscious (in and out) but in a daze and had no idea what had happened. He even asked me "what happened Charles?"

I cut his seatbelt to try to pull him out because I saw smoke and risk of fire, but that smoke dissipated, so I just stayed with him, talking to him, keeping him conscious until the fire department arrived on scene, about 3 minutes after the crash.