

Joshua Young
Air Safety Investigator
AS-ERA

Date: 4/11/2024

Subject: ERA24FA160, Former Flight Instructor Statement

Contact: Thomas Soto, Flight Instructor, Right Rudder Aviation

Mr. Soto emailed the IIC the following statement on April 10, 2024, about his time as the accident pilots flight instructor.

"Hello Joshua. I am writing to provide a detailed account of the flight training sessions conducted with Mr. Arthur Canning, back in 2021.

Art and I embarked on a series of five flights in the Pipistrel Alpha Trainer motor glider, totaling approximately five hours of flight time. Our first session took place on April 26th, 2021, and we concluded our last flight on May 17th, 2021. Art's interest in the motor glider stemmed from his personal project of building a Merlin Lite aircraft. He aimed to register it as a glider due to the inability to obtain a medical certificate, a requirement impacted by his age and health conditions.

Our initial hours were dedicated to fundamental maneuvers, including climbs, descents, and maintaining straight and level flight and becoming familiar with the avionics of the Alpha Trainer, in this case a Garmin G3X touch. These sessions also included a practical demonstration of an engine shutdown during flight, followed by the gliding capabilities of the aircraft. The second flight focused on power-off stalls, steep turns, and slow flight, with the engine operational throughout.

In our third session, we concentrated on engine shutdown procedures in flight, which was complemented by practicing engine-off landings. The subsequent fourth and fifth flights were devoted to traffic pattern procedures and radio communication protocols.

Unfortunately, due to the lengthy commute and unfavorable weather conditions, Art decided to pause his lessons for the time being. Throughout our training, it was evident that Art possessed a high level of motivation and enthusiasm for obtaining his certificate. He consistently demonstrated a positive and receptive attitude during our meetings.

However, to the best of my memory, it is important to note that, in my opinion, considerable practice was still required before considering solo flights. Given Art's age, his hand-eye coordination and multitasking abilities presented challenges that needed to be addressed with further training at the time.

Please feel free to reach out if you require any additional information or clarification regarding our sessions. Thank you."