



Timothy W. Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Office of Aviation Safety - Eastern Region

Date: May 7, 2024

Subject: ERA24LA208, Record of Conversation/Interview

Contact: Benjamin Jungwoo Lively

Mr. Benjamin J. Lively contacted NTSB by phone on May 7, 2024, at 1149 EDT. He called from [REDACTED]. He provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED].

At the beginning of the phone call 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 was advised by e-mail when sending this document for review that it will not be released to the public until the investigation is finished and when published, any personal identifiable information (PII) such as cell phone number, e-mail address, address, pilot certificate number, etc., will be redacted and not viewable in the released document.

His address on file with the Federal Aviation Administration is [REDACTED] Sebring, Florida 33876. His cellular phone is [REDACTED]. His pilot certificate number is [REDACTED]. He holds a commercial pilot certificate with airplane single engine land and sea, and airplane multi-engine land and sea. It was last issued for an address change on May 2, 2023. He also holds a flight instructor certificate with airplane single engine, airplane multi-engine, and instrument airplane ratings issued May 2, 2023. He holds a 1st class medical certificate with limitation "must use corrective lenses" issued June 5, 2023. He estimated his total flight time was 1,300 hours and his total flight time in the AirCam as "just over" 800 hours. His total time as a flight instructor in the AirCam was estimated to be about 790 hours, and his total time in the AirCam with Reversible propellers was just about 1 hour.

He is a salaried employee of Sebring Aviation. His title is Flight Instructor. His first flight as a flight instructor with Sebring Aviation was March 7, 2022. As part of him being hired, Sebring Aviation paid him to get his multi-engine sea rating.

He was asked the following questions –

How did your flight with the accident pilot come about and when was it?

His flight schedule cleared and on April 30th, he flew with the accident pilot, Heinz Peier, who had asked him to go on a flight with him to determine the “draft” or “waterline” on the floats. They did 1 water landing.

Mr. Lively reported that their flight on the 30th of April departed from Sebring Regional Airport (SEF), Sebring, Florida, levelled off and proceeded to Lake Francis for a water landing. The pilot configured the airplane properly and displayed good energy management. On final approach to the lake, he was checking the wind and verified before touchdown that the landing gear was retracted. He added that the pilot was ahead of the airplane. After touchdown the engines were secured, and the pilot got out of his seat to mark the water level on the floats with tape. He (Mr. Lively) took pictures and later provided to NTSB. The pilot returned to the airplane, and Mr. Lively informed the pilot they could do some sailing. They went backwards and the pilot was performing sailing good. The pilot then started the engines and allowed them to warm up. He (Mr. Lively) then informed the pilot that they could do step taxi, which Mr. Lively demonstrated 1st. After getting on the step, he reduced power slightly, then began “manipulating the stick position to demonstrate proper step taxi attitude.” The power was reduced to idle, and the airplane settled onto the water. Mr. Lively then informed the pilot to step taxi, and he got onto the step good and then brought the engines to idle power. He had him perform a 2nd step taxi and when the rpm on both engines was in the takeoff range the airplane was “static” and did not move. The pilot brought the power on both engines to idle, and he (Mr. Lively) asked the pilot to cycle the propellers. The pilot did that and after applying takeoff power on both engines the airplane began moving forward with, “no turn, not going backwards, not turning.” The pilot did the step taxi followed by step turns, which looked great. He then performed a normal takeoff with no issues noted and returned to SEF entering the airport traffic pattern. The pilot cycled the landing gear down and landed uneventfully at SEF.

What was the time of the flight on the 30th?

They were wheels up at 1027 and returned and landed at 1110.

Did you tell the pilot to have the propellers checked out?

During their debriefing they discussed what occurred. The pilot at that time informed him he was still, “working out the kinks in the system.” He (Mr. Lively) informed him to verify, and triple verify that the propellers were in the right position.

Did the pilot say he would check them out?

He was aware and said he would have it addressed.

NTSB Questions Continued –

Do you know if the propeller issue was addressed by maintenance?

The pilot said he would work on the final improvements of the system.

Did you see the accident flight depart?

He did not fly anymore that day. He did see the airplane flying later that same week, because he lives near SEF.

Did you talk with the pilot after the debrief and before the accident flight?

No. They planned the following week would fly some more and would perform rough water, confined area, glassy water, normal procedures, and emergency procedures.

When the pilot was performing the 2nd step taxi where the airplane did not move did you see the position of the propeller levers or switches?

They were switches, and he could not see them from the back seat. At the rear seat position, he has a throttle control and stick and rudder controls, but no propeller control system. The front seat pilot had a throttle control, no mixture control, and propeller switches. The front seat pilot also had ignition/starter, primer, auxiliary fuel pump, trim, and propeller controllers for the propeller pitch control (Figure 1).

Do you have any pictures of the front cockpit?

No.

So, when you asked the pilot to cycle the propellers blade angle what did you see him doing?

He noted the pilot brought both propellers back into full reverse, then forward and the airplane started moving forward.

When the pilot went into reverse did the airplane move backwards?

Yes.

After cycling each propeller did he say anything?

He does not recall what he said, but the pilot was confused why that happened.

Did you have any issue with the propellers between the 2nd attempt at step taxi and shutdown at SEF?

No, just that one instance.

Were you filming or recording?

No. He can send me pictures showing the water level on the floats in the water.

Were both engines were at maximum power at the 2nd step taxi attempt by the pilot?

Yes.

NTSB Questions Continued –

Is there anything I have not asked that I should know?

No.



Figure 1: View of Left Side of Front Seat Instrument Panel Showing Left and Right FlyBox Propeller Regulator.

The call ended at 1226 EDT.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on May 8, 2024. He replied the same day with comments that were incorporated into the narrative. The digest was amended on June 12, 2024 to correct errors. The FINAL digest was e-mailed to him and the investigative team on June 12, 2024.



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Office of Aviation Safety - Eastern Region

Date: May 15, 2024
Subject: ERA24LA208, Record of Conversation/Interview
Contact: Corey J. Miller

Ms. Cecilia Peier, daughter of the pilot was contacted by phone on May 15, 2024, at 0959 EDT. She was called at [REDACTED] and left a voice mail message. Her e-mail address is [REDACTED]

On the same day at 1029 EDT, Mr. Corey J. Miller, husband of Cecilia Peier contacted NTSB by phone. He called from [REDACTED] He provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED]

He was advised by e-mail when sending this document for review that it will not be released to the public until the investigation is finished and when published, any personal identifiable information (PII) such as cell phone number, e-mail address, address, pilot certificate number, etc., will be redacted and not viewable in the released document.

He indicated that on either May 12th, or May 13th, he was at the hospital with his father-in-law (accident pilot), and during a brief conversation that lasted about 5 minutes, his father-in-law asked him what the investigation had found wrong with the airplane. Mr. Miller advised him that the investigation was on-going and they had spoken with NTSB and FAA. Mr. Peier said something about the propellers. Mr. Miller asked him what side and Mr. Peier said he couldn't remember but told him something about a switch position related to the propellers would confirm he did nothing wrong to cause the propeller issue.

Mr. Miller indicated that he went to Sebring, Florida yesterday and obtained and secured the maintenance records and logs for the airplane knowing that the investigative team would need them. He took them to his home address of [REDACTED] Ormond Beach, Florida 32174.

Mr. Miller was advised that Federal Aviation Administration inspector Joseph Gramzinski would pick them up from him at his home address on May 16, 2024, about 1300 hours EDT.

The call ended at 1043 EDT.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on May 15, 2024. He replied on May 17, 2024 at 0701 EDT with a correction to the digest and also the same day at 0703 EDT with, "Everything else seems to be correct. Thank you for your help in the matter. Corey." The FINAL digest was e-mailed to him on March 16, 2026.



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Office of Aviation Safety - Eastern Region

Date: June 12, 2024

Subject: ERA24LA208, Record of Conversation/Interview

Contact: Thomas J. Smith, Hendricks Field Aviation, LLC

Hendricks Field Aviation, LLC was contacted by phone on June 12, 2024, at 1459 EDT and left a voice mail message. The company was called at [REDACTED]. Mr. Thomas J. Smith of Hendricks Field Aviation, LLC returned the call the same day at 1512 EDT, from the same phone number. He provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED].

Towards the end of the call, he was advised that the NTSB has no authority to take any action against any individual, and the purpose of an NTSB investigation is for safety only.

He was advised by e-mail when sending this document for review that it will not be released to the public until the investigation is finished and when published, any personal identifiable information (PII) such as cell phone number, e-mail address, address, pilot certificate number, etc., will be redacted and not viewable in the released document.

He indicated that he holds a private pilot certificate and airframe and powerplant certificates, certificate number [REDACTED]. He has about 1,400 hours in an AirCam and about 2,000 hours in all aircraft.

Hendricks Field Aviation was contacted by NTSB as that company performed weight and balance of the airplane after the floats were installed. He was sent an e-mail the same day asking for a copy of work order (WO) 24026 and also for a copy of the weight and balance document prepared. He indicated that he did fill out on the AirCam website the weight and balance data and also retained a copy of what he prepared.

During the course of the conversation he indicated that he had flown with the accident pilot 2 or 3 days before the crash. That flight was associated with the installation of the floats that was signed off on April 26, 2024, and was associated with returning the airplane to service. Mr. Smith

indicated that he could not recall during the phone call of the exact date of the flight but would research and advise.

Mr. Smith indicated that during his 1 flight in the accident airplane with the accident pilot, he (Mr. Smith) was in the rear seat and was acting as pilot-in-command during the takeoff. After takeoff he noted there was a mismatch between the left and right engine rpm, with the left rpm more than the right. Each FlyBox propeller regulator were then placed in manual mode while the accident pilot manipulated propeller blade angle. They remained in manual mode until landing. The rpm was set to 5,400 for climb out at 60 miles-per-hour. The pilot advised him that the red-guarded switches were not to be used in flight, they were to be used only on landing.

After landing on the water, the pilot opened the red guarded switches for propeller reverse and maneuvered on the water. The red guarded switches were then closed and each Operating Mode Switch of the Propeller Regulator (Figure 1) were placed in the constant speed position. Mr. Smith indicated that the rpm difference was likely because the low pitch stops were mismatched resulting in a rpm and manifold pressure difference.



Figure 1: View of PR1-P Propeller Regulator Panel.

During takeoff with the Operating Mode Switch in constant speed mode, the rpm would be off about 300 between the left and right when manifold pressures were matched, and if the rpm's were matched, the manifold pressures were off about 3 inches.

NTSB Questions –

What seat were you in when acting as pilot-in-command?
Rear seat.

NTSB Questions Continued –

Did you see the LH Beta Prop and RH Beta Prop annunciator lights illuminate on the instrument panel (Figure 2) when the propeller(s) was/were put into reverse while on the water?

There were 2 illuminated red lights on each side of the instrument panel. The light-emitting diode (LED) lights went on when the red guards of the propeller reverse were opened. They maneuvered on the water with 1 propeller in course pitch and the other in reverse pitch, and then repeated that with the other engine with no propeller issues noted. The flight departed with the FlyBox Operating Mode Switch set to Constant Speed mode then was placed in Manual and adjusted manually.



Figure 2: View of the upper central portion of the Instrument Panel showing the annunciator lights. Red arrow points to Left (LH) Beta Prop Annunciator Light while Yellow Arrow Points to Right (RH) Beta Prop Annunciator Light.

Did you notice any propeller issues when reducing power?

He did not. They did 2 or 3 water landings with the Operating Mode Switch in manual. The only issue he noted was the rpm and manifold pressure discrepancy. The rpm for landing was with the Operating Mode Switch in manual.

Did you know how the reverse and FlyBox interacted and whether there was a safety between them?

The linear actuator had a printed circuit board and operating the FlyBox used only 1 power and ground circuit. The reverse guarded and controlling switches operated on a 2nd power and ground circuit.

The call ended at 1541 EDT.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on June 12, 2024. He did not reply. The FINAL digest was e-mailed to him on March 16, 2026.