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Aviation Accident Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: October 21, 2024

Subject: ERA25LA014 Pilot Interview

Contact: Thomas White

Mr. White was contacted via telephone to discuss the accident of N1131M. The following is a summary of that conversation.

Mr. White was asked to describe the events leading up to the accident. Mr. White mentioned that he had received a concussion because of the accident. He stated that the purpose of the flight was to fly his friend and his friend's son on a short trip. His friend wanted to get his son experience in a small airplane. Mr. White said that he prefers to fly in the morning, but he could not get his schedule to line up with his friend's schedule, so they elected to meet around 2:00pm. The weather looked "fine". They departed from Mallory Airport, but they did not know exactly what they wanted to do in the air, so Mr. White decided to go fly over his friend's house in Charleston to do a photoshoot.

Mr. White commented that he generally flies his airplane from the right seat because he did a lot of aerial photography work and the left window is the only one that opens. Mr. White added that his friend, Ted, was in the left seat for that reason.

Mr. White stated that they flew "along the river" and overflew the passenger's house. They then completed a 180° turn back towards the house before flying to a different airport 20 miles to the southwest to fuel the airplane. After fueling the airplane, they departed to head back to Mallory Airport. During the approach everything "was fine, nothing was weird". At this point, Mr. White commented that during the preflight, he had been observing the flags that are mounted above the main office at the airport. He commented that they were drooped down and that there was not a lot of wind. He commented that the TAF report was "fine". Mr. White continued that he set up to land like usual, and he entered the downwind. He input 10° of flaps to slow down. He

continued that the pattern altitude is 1600ft. Mr. White stated that the airport has a 2000ft runway and that it is about 25-35ft wide in a north and south orientation.

Mr. White stated that everything continued to be normal, but that there is a hill at the airport and to land, you must get close to the trees and "be very slow". As he crossed the hill, he stated that "something happened like a sling shot that through him further down the runway". He commented that he was able to get the airplane on the ground and that he was "mashing" his left foot on the brake pedal. He commented that the airplane wanted to go off of the right side of the runway.

Mr. White stated that he broke his ankle in several places as a result of the accident. He commented that was all he remembered from the accident.

Mr. White commented that there was an "un-forecasted gusty wind that grabbed him". It was a direct tailwind. He also stated that he did see the flags on the office "sitting out" very briefly for a second or two from the tailwind direction, but that the wind went away very quickly.

Mr. White was asked if knew how far down the runway he was when the airplane landed. He replied that he did not know, but the airplane engine up close to the end of the runway off to the right side. He stated that he believes he was close to the middle of the runway at touchdown, approximately 1000ft.

Mr. White provided an email address of [REDACTED]

-End of conversation