



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

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Date: 4/16/2019
Person Contacted: Charles Miller (USDA Check Airman)
NTSB Accident Number: GAA19CA158

Narrative:

The following is a synopsis of the information provided by the USDA Check Airman in an email conversation on this date:

We went to the upper air work...the steep turns, slow flight, and stalls. I have [pilots] do the stalls in both power on and off scenarios and in level and then left and right turns. This simulates the accelerated stall and shows the higher airspeed in which it stalls showing that it is angle of attack, not speed. I then demonstrate what I believe is the culprit to this whole situation. I pull us into a descending turn back to the target (simulated), with the nose pointed at the ground and get us stalled. This shows them quick how it does no matter what attitude the airplane is in, it will stall. Trying to get back to that target or runway, pulling on the stick and stalling. Gary's stall recovery was a little wild in the beginning. He really drove that nose down. I demonstrated and had him follow, that just releasing the back pressure reduces the angle of attack below the critical angle of attack and gets the wing flying again with minimal altitude loss. Also, with the stalls in the turns, the top wing always fell first. I kept telling him to quit pushing top pedal and stay coordinated. He told me multiple times that he was not pushing the top pedal. I did not pick up on exactly what he was saying, initially. Next, we went low level and I had him show me a pass on a stationary target. Right off the bat, I did not like the way he made his passes. He was making big circles, not the clover leaf that we teach here. He was making a climbing turn and basically, flying back through his vortices. I demonstrated to him how it is to be done for the agency, he agreed it is much safer. When he demonstrated it, again he was getting uncoordinated in the left turn. I told him to quit pushing top pedal and he responded with "he was not pushing it." He could even see what I was jumping him about but did not know what was happening. It finally dawned on me.

I asked him about adverse yaw. He could not explain it to me. (I will be adding this to my written assessment) I asked him if he could do Dutch Rolls, again he had heard of them but did not know how. The Dutch Roll, if you do not know, shows adverse yaw and allows you to practice to prevent it. I had him do it these and it was obvious, he was doing exactly like he kept telling me...NOT PUSHING THE RUDDER PEDALS...at all! I firmly believe that in his big turns he had gotten complacent and lazy over the years and was not pushing the rudder pedals. Wiley also brought up the point of him pivoting his wrist on his leg when he rolls the airplane, and additionally looking over his shoulder and potentially pushing top rudder, as mentioned above. This also backs up the crewmember's statement of "over ruddering" as in the slower atmosphere and higher angles of attack, the adverse yaw is very dominant and obvious.

Gary actually felt pretty sheepish after this. I told him he needed to "precess" (I know this is may be not a word but meaning push pedal first then bring in aileron) the turn with rudder then maybe back out of it, depending on the turn. That was when the light went off in his mind. Fellas, it seems simple, but I think we hit it here. From this point forward, Gary was doing everything much smoother. Now, initially I wondered if he was just appeasing me, so taking out the Decathlon would test him. It is very sensitive to control inputs. Most of these guys are a bit rough with it as they are not used to the sensitivity. Gary did a great job right from the beginning.