



**Elliott Simpson**  
**Aviation Accident Investigator**  
**Western Pacific Region**

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**NTSB Accident Number: WPR16FA041**

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**Narrative:**

**In an email to FAA Inspector Larry DeCosta, dated December 21, 2015, Mr. Matthews stated the following:**

*Aircraft: N762FE, Cessna 208B Caravan, GPS and TKS anti-icing system equipped Route of flight: ABQ/FAT Crew member: John Clifton Matthews Cert. No [REDACTED]*

*Mr. DeCosta,*

*I arrived in the Tehachapi CA area around 00:00 and was on an IFR clearance to ARVIN intersection at 12'000.*

*Moderate rime/mixed icing was encountered just northwest of Mojave airport and over the Tehachapi Pass area.*

*BFL approach queried me as to the amount of turbulence I was experiencing. I reported that I had a few bumps but nothing bad. I don't remember the exact OAT at this time but it was below -06c. I was anxious to clear the Tehachapi area and get to lower, warmer altitude. BFL approach asked me to monitor 121.5 for an ELT because they were looking for someone. I monitored guard frequency through the rest of the flight and heard nothing.*

*I had to run the TKS system on my aircraft on Max Airframe at least three times to clear the ice. During my flight, west of Tehachapi and north west of ARVIN intersection, I had some ground contact.*

*The clouds were to the ground with no possibility to go VFR.*

*Please feel free to call me if you have any other questions Larry. I'm greatly saddened to hear about this accident.*

*I wish there was something I could have done to help.*

*John Matthews*  
[REDACTED]

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**The following is an email statement provided to FAA Inspector Kevin Marpert, on January 4, 2016, from the pilot of N2304D, who was flying in the accident area about the time of the accident:**

*Kevin:*

*As you requested over the phone, here is my report of the weather I saw in the Bakersfield area on 12/19/2015.*

*For my flight from the SF Bay Area to Riverside, the weather at departure and destination was good. However, I had to traverse a cold front along the way. Although there were reported tops of clouds up to FL210 in some areas and likely much rain and bad weather at lower altitudes including icing conditions, I was able to avoid the severe weather visually by deviating as needed mostly over the top, but sometimes in and out of some of the higher topped clouds. We picked up only traces of ice if any on our flight. ATC relayed reports of only light icing in the area. I believe there was an airmet in effect for moderate icing. We encountered, at most, light turbulence.*

*My estimation of the tops in the area around our aircraft as we passed the Bakersfield area were a maximum of about 16K. As we exited clouds from time to time there was blue sky above us. I was on oxygen but my passengers were not, so we did not climb above 15K. If the pilot of the aircraft you are inquiring about was not on oxygen, perhaps hypoxia might have added to his troubles and might explain why he did not climb higher to get above and out of the clouds.*

*I hope this helps.*

*Best Regards,*

*Dave*



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**The following is a compilation of email comments from the co-owner of N36402, Terry Pickard:**

4/22/16:

*Hi Elliot, I had the oxygen tanks filled when Jason took the plane & there was only a verbal agreement to refill them when each member finished their flight using the oxygen.*

1/19/16:

*Hi Elliott, Yes the partnership agreement is that we leave the aircraft topped with fuel when finished with flying it.*

1/5/16:

*Hi Elliot, The auto pilot was operational & was used mostly for headings. To the best of my knowledge.*

**During a follow-up conversation on 4/3/17, Mr. Pickard stated the following:**

He had flown the airplane multiple times since the flight log notation (8/21/15 "Autopilot Inop") and he had used the autopilot on those flights. He stated that he regularly used the autopilot, and it had always been reliable in heading and altitude hold modes, however, he never used it slaved to the NAV system or for approaches, because it required a level of competency with instrument approaches that he did not have. He stated that it was reliable, and held course well. He opined that Jason Price most likely did not know how to use the autopilot, hence the logbook entry.

With regards to oxygen, there were three cannulas in total for the oxygen system.

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**During telephone conversations on March 10, 2016 and March 20, 2017, Tom Elliott [REDACTED] stated the following:**

He was the stepfather of the pilot Jason Price, and the main family contact for the investigation. He was made aware following the accident that the flight was intended to be to a family vacation in Henderson, the town that the Price family once lived in. There was to be a surprise party for a family friend in Henderson that night, and the Price family had planned on attending that party.

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**Fueling Records:**

Per Jeff Marionette, from San Jose Fuel. Jason Price, purchased 65.6 gallons on October 16, 2015. But fuel purchased subsequently about 4 or 5 times under different names. The last two fuel purchases were for Terry Pickard November 27, 2015 (1230), 19.6 gallons, and November 28, 2015 (1613), 19.5 gallons, purchased by Kent Burke.

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Jody from Magnum Aviation (E16) Airport, reported that on Dec 9, 2015, at 1417. 59.26 gallons were purchased from the self-service pump for the tail number of N36402.