



RECORD OF COMMUNICATION

Michael Huhn
Air Safety Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Date: December 27, 2016

Person Contacted: Mr. Michael Rhodes (E79 resident, partial witness)

NTSB Accident Number: WPR17FA041

Narrative: The following is a summary of information that was provided in a conversation with Mr. Rhodes on this date:

- Mr. Rhodes has had his pilot certificate for 37 years
- He is a resident of Sierra Sky Park
- He was outside speaking with another resident at the time of the event
 - [At that time he was located at ██████ W. Chennault]
- He visually observed the airplane when it was taxiing eastbound for the departure, and the beginning of the takeoff roll (on runway 30)
- He did not visually observe the liftoff or any other portion of the flight
- He heard the airplane climb for about 10 to 15 seconds, and the engine sounded like it was developing good power
- He then heard the power decrease noticeably; he stated that the pilot "pulled the power back"
- He then heard a few "pops" from the engine, which he characterized as normal when the power is reduced suddenly and significantly
- He remarked to the person he was with that "somethings up" meaning an unusual situation was developing
- He then heard the sound of impact about 7 to 10 seconds later
- He headed for the accident site, and reported that he was the first person on scene
- He stated that there was the "odor of gasoline but no sheen" on the water that the airplane struck and came to rest in
- The condition of the wreckage indicated to him that the occupants did not survive the accident
- He stated that he thought the pilot was a "good pilot" but opined that the pilot was "behind the airplane" He did not provide any elaboration on this opinion or its basis
- He stated that an individual named "Doug Shell" [spelling uncertain] had flown with the accident pilot about 1 to 2 weeks prior
 - Mr. Shell was reportedly familiar with this make and model airplane
 - Mr. Rhodes did not know the purpose of that flight

- He also stated in an email that "My wife watched the takeoff from the kitchen window and saw him rotate almost straight up"
- He reported that he would provide the location of that rotation point to the investigation, which he did the following day [see below]

- On December 28, Mr Rhodes provided the following in an email:
"From the view of the rotation point as observed by my wife, Elizabeth Rhodes, in the kitchen at [REDACTED] N Doolittle Drive----1,597'. Measurement taken from the beginning of the runway threshold line for runway 30. My wife wondered why he was doing an acrobatic maneuver so low to the ground.

This rotation point is also directly in line from the living room of the Coelho residence at the corner of Doolittle/Vandegrift. Sue Coelho also observed the take off and the steep pitch up."