



RECORD OF COMMUNICATION

Michael Huhn
Air Safety Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Date: January 16, 2020
Person Contacted: Mr. Todd Rahmes (Owner/pilot)
NTSB Accident Number: WPR18LA256

Narrative:

The following is a verbatim extract of the information in an email exchange between the NTSB & Mr. Rahmes on this date. The first portion consists of NTSB Questions & Pilot Responses, followed by an unsolicited, pilot-provided narrative.

:

- a) Approx how many times had you made that trip prior to the accident? 8 to 10 -not every time stopping in TKX but maybe half, and definitely the last 4 or 5.
- b) Do you recall why you decided to pick up your IFR clearance to ARB by radio once you were airborne? I told Memphis on descent that I would be calling them on departure for a clearance, and I'm also somewhat uncomfortable getting a clearance using the 1 800 Wx Brief (at the time) method because I rarely do it. It is also time consuming. It is extremely easy to get the clearance by radio. Also, very little traffic in the area.
- c) Was that your normal routine/procedure for VMC/VFR departures out of TKX Yes
- d) Were there any factors/limitations/etc that induced a sense of urgency to free the module so that you could more clearly/comfortably communicate w ATC & pick up your clearance (eg obstacles, wx, etc) I recall there was broken cover (or at least a thin layer) at around 3000 ft. Engine noise is annoying without ANR and it is difficult to communicate over the radios in the scenario at max power. I wanted to get the clearance prior to hitting that layer.
- e) Do you recall your planned enroute altitude from TKX to ARB: No, but it would've been around 10 to 11,000. Can't remember if it was slightly east or west going north.
- f) Do you have any sense/thoughts as to why you didn't ask your wife to try to free the headset control module Yes – she would've had to reach directly over the power lever and then straight down on the other side and that's just not a good idea. Plus, she was strapped in and that would've probably required her to unstrap.
- g) Do you recall what, if any, time pressure/constraints there were to depart TKX/arrive ARB (eg wx, appointment, etc) We had a dinner date with my wife's brother and his wife... I don't know if it contributed to us moving any faster, honestly. I recall sitting in the FBO and eating my lunch and planning my leg on my iPad. Interestingly, I think I left my tablet in the FBO, because it was never found in the aircraft.

Here's something else: We were originally planning on flying commercial, since when we scheduled the trip, the aircraft was not available (I had it in a managed "lease" program to help defer costs). However, it became available. We were still going to fly commercial, so we were up at 430 am for the 630 am flight, and the commercial flight, after a couple hours delay, was cancelled. It was stressful while we spoke with reservations, headed back to the house to get our emergency gear etc in preparation for taking our aircraft instead while negotiating with the airline since the flight wasn't quite cancelled yet, but being a pilot, I was 90% sure it was going to be based on what I was able to glean from the mechanical issue. So when we got to our airplane, we were running behind, and we'd been up for quite a while. So, some feedback I've gotten is that I was probably fatigued. However, I was very comfortable with the flight because I'd taken it so many times. Besides leaving the iPad, another indicator that I wasn't quite with it, was that I got into the aircraft, started my checklist, and then realized the grounding wire for the fuel pump was still affixed to the aircraft (that's the first time I had ever done that). So I got out and took care of that. Finally, my instructors had advised me that on a short refuel stop, there really is no reason to do a runup. So I didn't in this case. If I had done the runup, I would've realized that the ANR was not on, and I would've saved myself an aircraft. As it was, I didn't realize it until the takeoff roll. This is a lot of cascading indicia. On the other hand, lots of flights have things go slightly out of whack, and you deal with it successfully. 1250 hours in fact of dealing with it successfully.