

Factual Report - Attachment 2

Records of Conversation

OPERATIONAL FACTORS

WPR21FA286



NTSB RECORD OF CONVERSATION

David Lawrence
Aviation Safety Investigator
Operational Factors Division, AS-30

Date: 8/26/2021 at 1340 CDT
Person Contacted: Troy Tuite – Founder/Tuite, Founder/President Jett Group Inc. (via phone)
NTSB Accident Number: WPR21FA286
Attendees: David Lawrence NTSB

Narrative:

- Mr. Tuite contacted the NTSB on 8/26/2021 at 1340 CDT
- He was the Founder and President of Jett Group Inc. in Addison, Texas
- He knew Bret Ebaugh, who before Covid was very busy and as a company they were not able to schedule him for flights. He knew Bret but had never met him.
- Bret had good references, and everyone spoke highly of Bret.
- Bret decided to sit out flying during Covid.
- In June of 2021, he and Bret first met when Bret was in Dallas getting recurrent Challenger training. He met Bret through another pilot Jett Group utilizes and was in the same training class with Bret at the time.
- He met that other pilot, Mark Racine, and Bret at a restaurant in Grapevine when they were in training, and that was the first time he had met Bret face-to-face. He said he got really good feedback on Bret and considered him a really nice guy. He had been great with Jett Group.
- He said they had a trip for Bank of America in N921BG (CL-605) to fly a one-day trip from KSTP to KGJT and return on June 8, 2021. They contracted with Bret to fly that trip.
- They also contracted him to fly on July 15, 2021 in the same airplane and flew KSTP-KCLT-KBTL-KCLT-KSTP.
- He said he had known Mark Racine for 15 years, and though they could not use Bret pre-Covid, he knew Mark flew with Bret on other accounts.
- He said Jim Bartikoski also flew with Bret on July 15, 2021.
- He said that because he had known Bret and he was a referral from so many people, they did not do a background check on Bret since the client he would be flying for did not require it.
- He said Jett Group had contracts with Boeing, Bombardier, Solaris, Clay Lacy, and some DoJ work, all of whom require drug test and background. It was last-minute and Bret had just finished training, so they did not do any background check.



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- He said they were going to do the checks with Bret since they were going to start using him for those other clients. He was going to use him on the Boeing contract since they flew 650's. He said they were considering using Bret on those contracts.
- They obtained his documents and licenses, and he completed tax and bank documents for payments. He said he believed they had him sign a contract verifying his credentials.
- He said for Jett Group, left-seat or right-seat flying was basically the same. When Bret flew with Mark, Bret was definitely in the left-seat, but both were essentially PICs. Jim was likely the SIC on that flight and Bret was PIC.
- He said Bret did do his last PIC recurrent training at DFW.
- He said they provide pilot services for companies. He was previously at Flexjet, and Bombardier created their own pre-owned division. They guys in Wichita and Bradley did not want to fly them. A sales guy used him as a contract pilot on a Lear sale, he hit it off with the V.P. and they started using him to fly their jet. Jett Group started in 2004. They support the Bombardier demonstration team, and also moved into some government flying.
- He said their business got busy during Covid. He said there just aren't enough pilots out there. When asked if there was a little bit of a pilot shortage in business aviation, he said "not just a little bit but a lot." The airlines haven't even started hiring yet and the lifting of required visas may have a lot more pilots going to the airlines.
- When asked if they had any problems pairing up pilots who were not vetted, he said they did not do that, unlike other operators. Their website has a phrase that says they must be referred to or known to him. They were unlike other operators who looked for pilots on the internet to fill seats. Bret was different and a known entity. With several of their contracts, there is an extensive onboarding process for pilots to go through.



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Aviation Safety Investigator
Operational Factors Division, AS-30

Date: 8/23/2021 at 1400 CDT
Person Contacted: Ron Buros – Jet A Director of Operations (via phone)
NTSB Accident Number: WPR21FA286
Attendees: David Lawrence NTSB

Narrative:

- Mr. Buros contacted the NTSB on 8/23/2021 at 1400 CDT
- He knew Bret Ebaugh well through his work on the certification process for California Pacific Airlines. The airline failed due to lack of funding.
- Mr. Buros was one of the investors in California Pacific Airlines.
- He considered Bret a really good guy, jovial and upbeat. He was a very positive guy, and one of the best sticks he had ever flown with.
- When a buddy called him and said "did you hear about Bret" and he said no and that he had only heard about the accident. When he found out Bret was in the accident, he listened to the LiveATC tape on the internet, texted Bret's wife and said there was no way Bret was flying that airplane. He said Bret would never have gotten himself in that situation.
- Mr. Buros had been with the Challenger program since the 1980's.
- He looked at the approach and weather. They were flying and had no idea why they weren't shooting the straight-in RNAV to runway 11, and calculated they had a 13-knot tailwind component for the approach they were flying.
- He did not know the guy Bret was flying with but saw on LinkedIn he had flown for Starship One.
- He said Bret had a lot of experience on the airplane.
- He said Bret went through a Part 135 course with his company, and flew both Part 91 and 135 trips for Jet-A.



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David Lawrence
Aviation Safety Investigator
Operational Factors Division, AS-30

Date: 9/1/2021 at 1100 PDT
Person Contacted: Mark Racine – CL-605 Pilot (via phone)
NTSB Accident Number: WPR21FA286
Attendees: David Lawrence - NTSB, Todd Gentry - FAA

Narrative:

- Mr. Racine contacted the NTSB on 9/1/2021 at 1100 PDT
- He worked for and insurance company that had a Challenger 605 that was on the Solaris Part 135 certificate. He also flew the Global.
- He came to Solaris from Baine Capital in the Bedford area. He lived in Chicago.
- He said he started flying CL-605 in about 1999 when he worked for the Waste Management.¹ Worked for pre-owned at Bombardier and did entry-into service flight and also some demo flights.
- He said he met Bret when he was at Bombardier and Bret was sent with him as a contractor on a couple of flights, about 8 years ago.
- He said Bret was a character, meticulous, and was world class aerobatics pilot. He said Bret was extremely knowledgeable and fun to fly with.
- He said Bret didn't have chinks in amour, not weak, and a well-rounded pilot. He considered Bret in the top 10%, and he understood all aspects of the job, was 3-dimensionanl thinking and always ahead of the airplane.
- For a while he would see him all the time, then not for 18 months.
- He recently reconnected with Bret since he was MSP based. He did some flying with his former boss, and he and Bret were paired together on a trip out of MSP for Bank of America. That flight was similar to an acceptance flight. In the last 4 years, Bret had been his simulator partner twice at CAE, which was just a coincidence. During covid, Bret had let his Challenger currency lapse since there simply wasn't much contract work and Bret didn't want to spend the money without any flying. Bret had just recently gotten back into contract work.

¹ According to Bombardier, The CL-605 did not enter service until 2007. The CL-605 shared a common type rating with the CL-604, which was in service in 1999.



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- When they were at training in June 2021, He was on the 605, and Bret was on the 604 in recurrent. They had dinner together in Dallas, and that's where he introduced Bret to Troy as a pure contractor.
- When asked when the last time he and Bret flew together, he said it was a couple of weeks before the accident when they were picking up an airplane in Provo that was coming out of maintenance and was being delivered. They flew the test flight together, and then Mark Couch flew the airplane with Bret to ICT.
- He also flew a trip with Bret in July 2021 to Napa, California. There were relatively low cloud decks in Napa and Bret flew a flawless RNAV approach with LPV. It had multiple step downs.
- They shared the flying duties, and typically had one of them fly for the day before switching. He said Bret was coming off about 6 months without flying the Challenger, and he wanted Bret to get comfortable in the seat again.
- He had a spreadsheet that shows each trip, and kept the actual trip sheet as back-up with more details for which pilot flew the airplane, which approach was flown, etc.
- He said Bret was a fantastic pilot.
- He said Bret liked to fly 3.8-degree flight idle descents and was a little steeper than his passengers would have liked. It wasn't wrong, but Bret liked the physics of it for fuel efficiency and something he wouldn't do.
- When asked how aggressive he was, he said he was not one to go hot-dogging or exceed things. He never saw Bret do that, regardless of passengers onboard or empty legs.
- He said Bret loved to talk on the radio, and he said people loved Bret for it.
- When asked about his checklist usage, he said Bret was excellent. Bret did things a little different, similar to the Air Force way, in that Bret would use the checklist as a "do list" versus the way he flew using flows and then the checklist. Both ways are acceptable, but you can't impose a flow on a pilot using it as a "do" list since that takes training.
- He would ask other contractors where they trained and would then say he wanted to use Bombardier checklists.
- He said Bret used the Air Force method of reading the item, and then doing it.
- He said he would not allow silent checklists.
- When asked if he saw a difference in the pilots based on where they trained (CAE or FlightSafety), he said no, he hadn't seen an obvious difference. There may be a difference in skills, but that was attributed to experience and skills, not the training.
- When asked if Bret would change altitudes, did he point to it, he said he remembered Bret dialed it in, stated the altitude and other pilot state it. He did not recall if Bret pointed to the altitude.



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- When asked if Bret would brief approaches, and also changes to an approach, he said he did when they flew together.
- He said they both also briefed every approach as well as the actual conditions at the airport. He did not recall if he flew a circle to land approach with Bret.
- When asked about any unusual flight spoiler usage from Bret, he said not that he recalled. The Challenger alerts you if you have flight spoilers and power with an aural warning.
- When asked what Bret's procedure for entering landing performance information into the FMS, he said he did not recall specifically. When asked if Bret entered the landing data in manually, he said you usually would enter the landing weight when in close, and the airplane would give you the numbers and the expected numbers at the field. He said on the Challenger, you could manually override what the FMS predicted, but that would never occur with him flying.
- When asked if Bret was aggressive controls on the Challenger, he said he had never seen him overshoot anything. He said he would have difficulty believing that Bret would over control an airplane, and he never saw him treat the Challenger as an aerobatic airplane.
- He said he had flown with "cowboys" in the airplane before, and Bret was not a cowboy.
- When asked if Bret's personality was such that if paired with a weaker personality, would he take over the cockpit, he said he had never seen that. With Bret, if he (Mark) was the PIC then Bret would do it his (Mark's) way, and if Bret was the PIC, Mark would do it Bret's way. He never got pushback from Bret.
- When asked if there was a big difference in how he and Bret would run their cockpits as PIC, he said everything was legal and safe, just maybe small differences in techniques.
- He said he heard there was a statement made at the Global training center when Mark Couch was there that someone told Mark that they were not big fans of the accident captain. He did not have any firsthand knowledge if that was true and had never flown with the accident captain.



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Operational Factors Division, AS-30

Date: 9/1/2021 at 1230 PDT
Person Contacted: Mark Couch – CL-650 Pilot (via phone)
NTSB Accident Number: WPR21FA286
Attendees: David Lawrence – NTSB; Todd Gentry - FAA

Narrative:

- He said he had one trip with Bret that had two legs back-to-back in June 2021. It involved an overnight.
- He said he had known Bret for about 20 years when he was a captain at PSA, and he flew with Bret as an FO.
- Bret had owned an aerobatics school and former runner up aerobatics champion.
- Bret went to EOS to fly the B757, and he followed Bret there around 2008-2009 for a very short time before the company folded.
- He then flew customer service flying for Bombardier delivering CRJ-900 and -1000's. He brought Bret onboard, and they would deliver airplanes to various places around the world.
- After that, he believed Bret was the chief pilot for California Pacific Airways, but that company never got off the ground. They spent several years trying to get that running. Bret then went to contract flying.
- Bret then called him up and talked him into doing Challenger contract flying. He said he had an entry-into-service job that he was Director of Operations on in Lexington, KY and he brought Bret over to Endeavor Aviation dba FL510 LLC for a couple of years pre-covid, and then had to let Bret go during covid. He wasn't certain what Bret's flight schedule was after that.
- He got a text from Bret when he was in Provo, and he asked Bret to help fly a delivery flight, so they flew together with Bret in the left seat. He said Bret was procedurally sound, 100% solid on a hand-flown approach. They flew another flight was Bret was standard on that flight as well, and there were no issues he could see.
- He got his global type at CAE in Dallas. He wasn't in Dallas when Bret was getting his recurrent on the Challenger.
- When asked if Bret had any issues at home or financially, he said no, and that Bret was stoked to be getting Challenger contracts and flying again. Bret's wife used to be a flight attendant at PSA and now works for a feeder company out of Dallas. Bret had just given his 14-year-old son his first flying lesson in a Cessna.



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- Bret also had a glider and was an excellent glider pilot.
- When asked if Bret was aggressive in the cockpit, he said he and Bret grew up in the airline world, and they would work well together, and Bret was standard.
- He said there was nothing out of the ordinary. Bret may not have been sharp like when they were flying at the airlines with a lot of legs, but he was still "100% sat." Bret was really relaxed in the cockpit. There was nothing that you could put Bret into that he couldn't get out of unless you got slow at low altitude, and then there's really nothing you can do.
- He did not know the other pilot in the accident, but he had heard third hand from his partner during his check ride that the other pilot (Alberto) was known around as "captain control" and that if Bret was flying with him, he'd had to be assertive or else he'd get run over. His simulator partner also said that Alberto was not well liked on the forums by other Challenger pilots since the Challenger community is a small and tight knit unit.
- He said he listened to the ATC recording that was available on the internet, and from what he could tell was that it looked like a cross-control stall at low altitude. He heard Bret's voice on the recording and surmised that Bret was being jovial with his "see ya on the ground" comment and may have let his guard down.
- When asked how Bret would run his cockpit and use checklists and conduct approach briefings when he was a PIC, he said he was shocked at first when he started contract flying how "loosey-goosey" some cockpits were run, but Bret and he grew up in the airline world and flew standard. He said Bret ran his Bombardier checklists every single time they flew.
- Bret was a huge fan of Apple products, and he loved using mini-iPads.
- For their last flight together, Bret was in the left seat for both flights and flew the airplane.
- Bret flew at the airlines for 10 years.
- He said Bret may not have had a lot of time flying recently and may have been a little too trusting and a little too excited where Bret wasn't his normal skeptical self.
- When asked how Bret got to COE, he said he did not know.
- He said Esteban Vega was the chief pilot of JAI Aviation Services who purchased their Challenger. When JAI purchased their Challenger, they wanted some IOE in the airplane. He said JAI were the ones who found Bret to provide JAI training in the Challenger. Esteban then hooked Jason Grieff at Aeolis up with Bret to fly the Van Nuys trip. He said he thought Jason Grieff was the chief pilot at Aeolis Air Charter because Jason had that title listed on his LinkedIn profile.



NTSB RECORD OF CONVERSATION

David Lawrence
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Operational Factors Division, AS-30

Date: 9/1/2021 at 1340 PDT

Person Contacted: Esteban Vega – Operations Manager JAI Aviation Services (via phone)

NTSB Accident Number: WPR21FA286

Attendees: David Lawrence – NTSB; Todd Gentry - FAA

Narrative:

- He said his company bought Challenger N605VV about a month before the accident. He was the captain and Chief pilot for his company. Since he did not have any time in the Challenger, he Googled Challenger training pilots, and Bret's profile came up on a pro pilot website.
- He called Bret and told him they were trying to hire a training captain to do training and IOE. Bret sent him his resume, and they exchanged emails, and added Bret to his insurance.
- When they finally took delivery of the airplane, they scheduled Bret to take Esteban up in the Challenger about 7 days after the accident on their first trip.
- He said he met Jason Grice with Aeolis through Challenger training in Delaware. He said Jason asked if they had a pilot that could cover a trip for Aeolis, and he said he only knew of Bret Ebaugh. He gave Jason the phone number for Bret, and they made contact and arranged for Bret to cover the Aeolis trip.
- He said he was chief pilot for Justice Air, Inc., a Part 91 company based out of California, and a manager for a Part 91 company that he owned.
- He said he met Jason Grice during Challenger 605 initial training at FlightSafety in Delaware. They were taking the 22-day course, and he only had ground school with Jason.
- Bret provided him a copy of his passport, medical and certificates, a copy of his last recurrent, and a completed company form for their insurance.
- When asked if he knew how Bret traveled to COE, he did not have an answer for that. The day before the accident, he exchanged a few text messages that he passed his Challenger. He told Esteban he was in COE with Alberto already.
- When asked if he knew Alberto, he said yes and no. He met Alberto in Delaware when Alberto was going through Challenger recurrent training. He said he, Alberto and Jason went out for dinner while they were in Delaware several times during Alberto's 3 days at recurrent.
- When asked about Alberto's personality, he said he had experience with flying Challengers in the Middle East, and B737's in Mexico. He said he was a happy person and talked about his experiences flying around the world. Alberto was outgoing and personable. He said Alberto



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looked healthy and now speaking problems. He didn't show any concerns about his ability as a pilot.

- When asked about his knowledge of the airplane, they did not talk about the 605 specifically, but his strongest knowledge was on the 601 that he flew in the Middle East. He said he believed Alberto came from a 601, and shared pictures with him of the 601. They did not discuss how much 605 time Alberto had.
- He said he got the impression that Jason was Alberto's boss at Aeolis, and assumed Jason had a management position but he wasn't sure. He got the impression from Alberto that Jason had a higher rank in the company than Alberto.
- He said he and Bret never flew together.