



Record of Conversation

Fabian Salazar
Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Investigator in Charge

NTSB Accident Number: WPR21FA298
Aircraft Registration & Make/Model: N8520G
Accident Location: Banning, California
Accident Date: July 30, 2021

Robert Spencer
Owner, Skydive West Coast, Banning Municipal Airport

In an interview with Mr. Spencer, he stated that he was piloting his airplane, conducting skydiving operations. In a radio conversation with the Cessna (accident airplane), he advised the pilot that if he stayed in the traffic pattern then he would have no problems with the skydivers. He said that the Cessna was doing touch-and-go's, and had done about 3, remaining in the traffic pattern for about 45 minutes. He said that the last call he heard from the Cessna was him complementing a pilot on his Lancair airplane.

Mr. Spencer stated that he had completed his drop and was descending to the airport. He began looking for the Cessna, but could not see it, so he thought that it may have departed.

He stated that the wind was 14 knots gusting to 19. He knew this because his skydiving cancellation wind speed was 20 knots.



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Maggie Carpenter
Witness

In an interview with Mrs. Carpenter, she stated that she, was in a car with her husband and her father-in-law who lives near the airport. They were travelling north, near the airport and she saw the airplane heading east and trying to land. "They didn't quite touch the runway and then they went back up." The family members entered the freeway driving east toward Palm Springs, and the airplane was now over the freeway heading north. She said that she, her husband, and her father-in-law were watching the airplane, and her husband stated that the airplane was going to do a trick, because he was sideways. She said that he then went up a little and then nose dove straight down. She said that he wasn't that high up in the air, "not too much higher than the electrical poles." She stated that his wings were up and down, with one wing pointing to the ground and one wing pointing to the sky. She said that he passed over the freeway like normal, and then when he got to the opposite side of the freeway, that was when he turned and then went straight down.



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Rosa Landa
Worker at CalTrans Station

In an interview with Ms. Landa, she said that she was working with two others [at the CalTrans station, located about a quarter of a mile north of BNG], and She heard but didn't see the accident. Another employee stated that he saw the airplane and he said that that the airplane just crashed. They went to the back of the building, near where the airplane crashed, and then called 911.



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Jason Greene
Worker at CalTrans Station

In an interview with Mr. Greene, he said that he was working with two other employees [at the CalTrans station, located about a quarter of a mile north of BNG] when Chriss tried to get his attention and said, "Hey Jason, look at that plane." He said that he heard the crash and saw the smoke but didn't see the airplane, only that Chris pointing at it.



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Christopher Grays
Worker at CalTrans Station

In an interview with Mr. Grays, he stated that he and two others (R. Landa, and J. Greene) were working in the parking lot of the CalTrans station, located about a quarter of a mile north of BNG. He said that he was facing east. He looked up and saw the airplane going north, from his right to his left, at an altitude that looked kind of low. He said that the airplane was going straight, then took a sharp left. He said that it wasn't a smooth left turn but like a quick turn and the airplane was on it's side. The airplane then nosedived and disappeared behind a building.



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Luis Vargas
Occupant, Engine 24

In an interview with Mr. Vargas, he stated that he was sitting up front in engine 24. He did not see the airplane, but once they were on the freeway heading westbound, he saw the column of smoke. He estimated that they were about 2 miles away from the airplane and thought that the airplane was about 200 feet above the ground.



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Kris Weidemann
Driver, Engine 24

In an interview with Mr. Weidemann, he stated that he was driving engine 24, and was on Seminole, heading to Apache Trail Road and intended to get onto the freeway. He saw the airplane and it started to bank left. He could see the top of the plane. He was merging onto the freeway and looked over and didn't see the airplane. As he was heading westbound toward the CHP station, he saw a column of smoke. He called their dispatch inquiring about a commercial or brush fire and received a negative reply. When they arrived at Ramsey, he received an announcement of a report of an airplane down, so they reported to the site. He estimated that the altitude of the airplane may have been 200 feet above the ground.



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Brian Williman
Occupant, Engine 24

In an interview with Mr. Williman, he stated that they were driving on Seminole drive near the roundabout [about 2 miles east of the accident site] when he saw an airplane that was in a bank. He thought that it might have been the top of the airplane because he did not see any wheels. He estimated that it was in a 45° banking turn. He said that was all that he saw, and he did not see it hit the ground. He said that once they came around the roundabout, they saw smoke. When asked to re-describe the airplane's attitude when he saw it, he stated that it was in a downward bank, but could not tell what direction it was turning.