



Federal Aviation Administration

Inspector Statement

Date: February 17, 2021

From: Jonathan S. Berges, Aviation Safety Inspector, WP-FSDO-09

Subject: Pilot Interview Russell Aircraft Accident N823RC/N718AK

On Saturday, February 13, 2021 Aviation Safety Inspectors Jonathan Berges and Oded Moore were assigned to investigate an aircraft accident for Falcon 900EX, N823RC, at Montgomery field airport (MYF) in San Diego, CA.

When I (Jonathan Berges) arrived on scene with inspector Moore we found the aircraft resting on a gravel pad approximately 500' from the departure end of runway 28R. The San Diego Fire Department and HAZMAT Teams had restricted access to the aircraft due to fuel leaking and pooling underneath the wreckage. We were informed by the Fire department crew and MYF Airport operations that the flight crew was off scene and waiting at their office in the Crown Air FBO building. We performed a preliminary walk around of the accident scene to document the airframe and debris trail.

In the Crown Air FBO we found the pilot in command (PIC), Scott Lawrence Kitchens, in the building and through him that the second in command (SIC), Nathan Daniel Russell, had left to transport the passengers to their home.

Inspector Moore and I interviewed Mr. Russell in the company office. We began the interview with asking for his pilot certificates. He said that they evacuated the aircraft and all of his belongings were in the plane. Also he remarked, that because of the FAA's reduced activity during COVID his temporary certificate from FlightSafety had expired, however he was able to obtain another temporary airman's certificate from www.faa.gov.

Mr. Russell began the interview by describing the events of the taxi and takeoff. He described what appeared to be a normal start-up, taxi, and pre-departure system checks. He stated that this being the third flight they've done together, he said he made a mental note in how their CRM was improving and took pride in how they were developing as a crew. He continued to describe the takeoff roll, that he could not recall many details as he was focused on call outs. He expressed that the 80 knot call was an important decision speed and that based on the departure conditions that the 80 knot airspeed call was their go/no-go decision speed. He then stated that Kitchens made 2 attempts to rotate the aircraft and then exclaimed, "F---, shut it down!" Russell stated he stood hard on the brakes, he "became an I-Beam" pressing on the brake pedals. While pressing on the brakes, Mr. Russell described his hands reaching for controls and making note that Kitchens had deployed the thrust reverser. He remarked that as they exited the runway,

Kitchens was shutting down the engines and securing the aircraft. Prior to exiting the aircraft Russell said that he himself turned the batteries back on, discharged the engine fire extinguishers, then turned the power off.

When asked, Mr. Russell stated that the pre-takeoff flight control check was performed twice. Once as part of a flow and a second time when completing the checklist.

He stated he did not recall any of the departure speeds or aircraft gross weights. He did make note of the total fuel of 22,500 pounds, that the plane was not topped off and that they normally plan for a 3,000 pound fuel reserve on landing.

Mr. Russell then began to describe his responsibilities and the nature of his employment. He stated he is employed directly by the aircraft owner and began full time employment in September 2019 as the owner's helicopter pilot and executive security specialist and that when the Falcon was purchased he was offered the position as SIC for the Falcon 900.

He then described the normal responsibilities for them as a crew. When a trip is planned, Russell will use the owner's helicopter to pick up the owner from their house and return to the airport. While he is enroute, Kitchens is performing the preflight activities on the Falcon. He provided his background as a Coast Guard pilot, then with Department of Homeland Security before obtaining his current position.

We inquired on his experience in the Falcon 900. He stated that he went to training at FlightSafety International in Dallas, TX in August or September, 2020 and that Kitchens went a Month later in October. The pilot stated they had only flown that plane two other times. The plane had been undergoing a cabin interior remodeling over the past few months and was just picked up earlier that week. They had flown from Springfield, IL (SPI) to Ft. Lauderdale, FL (FLL) and then to San Diego Montgomery Field (MYF).

Later after we received clearance from San Diego Fire Department and HAZMAT teams we escorted the crew to the aircraft to obtain their pilot certificates. Once onboard the aircraft, Mr. Russell obtained and presented his medical and a temporary pilot certificates. The temporary certificate he presented did not list a DA-EASY type rating.

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