

RECORD OF ☒ VISIT ☐ CONFERENCE OR ☐ TELEPHONE CALL		TIME 1400	DATE 1/30/2024
NAME (S) OF PERSON (S) CONTACTED OR IN CONFERENCE AND LOCATION		ROUTING	
		SYMBOL	INITIALS
Tanya Ledbetter / Email [REDACTED] / Title: PSA FBO General Manager			
Was in contact with pilot prior to flight / arranged aircraft prep prior to flight			
SUBJECT Provided Sequence of Events prior to N30AK taking off			
DIGEST			
Visited the PSA FBO directly after leaving the accident scene. Tanya seemed to be waiting on us (FAA) and had fuel receipts, also a sequence of events prior to takeoff. Tanya also provided us with video of sequence of events stated below. Video has been uploaded and saved in the working file.			
Sequence of Events			
- Jacek Romanski called for his aircraft to be pulled out of the community hangar at 0920			
- Jacek and his wife arrived at PSA FBO at 0956			
- Engines start at 1007			
- Aircraft starts to taxi at 1009			
CONCLUSION, ACTION TAKEN, OR REQUIRED Received sequence of events and video evidence from PSA FBO			
DATE 2/13/2024	TITLE Aviation Safety Inspector	SIGNATURE [REDACTED] 07:04:45 -08'00'	

Horn, Justin M (FAA)

From: Mike Coberly <[REDACTED]> PM
To: [REDACTED] (FAA)
Subject: Re: N30AK

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Correct N30AK

Mike

Michael J Coberly
Director of Aircraft Maintenance
(925) 685-4400 ext. #111
Pacific States Aviation
101 John Glenn Drive
Concord, Ca. 94520



On Tue, Feb 13, 2024 at 2:45 PM [REDACTED] (FAA) <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Mike,

Thanks for providing a written statement of your account on that day. Just to clarify your statement, you mean N30AK and not N90AK?

Respectfully,

[REDACTED]

Aviation Safety Inspector

Oakland Flight Standards District Office WP-27

[REDACTED]



From: Mike Coberly <[REDACTED]> PM

To: [REDACTED] (FAA)

Subject: Re: N30AK

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Justin,

Upon arriving at the scene, the aircraft (N90AK) was surrounded by fuel, not substantial but enough to saturate the ground. I had to warn first responders that they were standing idle in fuel and vapors. They quickly moved from the aircraft to assess the situation. One of the firemen wanted to find the fuel shut off. I told him it would be no use due to the fuel being out of the aircraft with its ruptured wings and the body being mangled in the wreckage. That being said the fuel shut off would be inaccessible. They secured the scene, I then tried to make contact with The FSDO and was finally told to leave the scene. No one took my name, number or ID. I figured they would as I was only feet away from the wreckage. But nothing.....

Michael J Coberly

Director of Aircraft Maintenance

[REDACTED]

Pacific States Aviation

101 John Glenn Drive

Concord, Ca. 94520



On Tue, Feb 13, 2024 at 9:52 AM [REDACTED] (FAA) <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Mike,

Thanks for taking my call this morning. Can you please provide a statement from your recollection of the events surrounding N30AK's accident on 1/30/2023? Let me know if you have any further questions.

Respectfully,

[REDACTED]

Aviation Safety Inspector

Oakland Flight Standards District Office WP-27

[REDACTED]



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Horn, Justin M (FAA)

From: Jim Ambrose [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 2:39 PM
To: [REDACTED] (FAA)
Subject: Re: Witness Statement

Justin,

This is my statement regarding the accident of Zero Alpha Kilo at Concord Airport on January 30.

A quick background about me. I'm 61 years old, retired from Chevron where I ended my career as a Learning & Development and Procedure Advisor for Chevron's complex process facilities worldwide. My last assignment was teaching Human Performance to procedure writers. I flew as a student pilot out of Navajo Aviation at Concord in 1990/91. I have 40 hours in my logbook but never earned my license (haven't flown an airplane since, don't worry). I go to the Concord Airport almost every day, unless the weather is really bad. I walk the dog for a while, then watch planes and listen to the tower and ground frequencies. I've been doing this for about the last five years. I have watched Zero Alpha Kilo flying the same short, steep left hand pattern for more than 12 years. I used to have an office down the street and would go outside on Wednesday mornings to watch him.

On the day of the accident, I arrived at the airport at about 10:15 AM. Zero Alpha Kilo was already flying and I had noticed him on the way to the airport. I parked on the west side of the field along the fenceline next to the Executive hangars. As I was walking north I stopped at one point to watch Zero Alpha Kilo and timed one of his patterns with a stopwatch at 1:55. A few minutes later I was walking back to my car when I heard Zero Alpha Kilo's engine "stumble". I immediately looked left and saw him climbing in his normal fairly steep angle at about 100 ft altitude and just past the end of runway 19L. I was located along the fence line road between the Clubhouse and the Executive hangars. From that point on I was watching and listening very intently. As the plane continued to climb at the same angle, the engine seemed to briefly quit, then come back to life two more times at about one second intervals, then it stopped for about two seconds, at which point the nose dropped slightly from the climb angle that he had maintained to about halfway to the horizon, then the engine briefly ran two more times before quitting completely. During all of this the plane was slowing down very noticeably. About two seconds after the engine finally quit, the left wing stalled and dropped rapidly and the nose dropped down about 70 degrees or so. The plane spun sharply to the left and from my vantage point disappeared behind the Executive hangars. At the time I lost sight, the plane had completed about 2/3 of a rotation and I could see the entire top of the aircraft. About 4 seconds later I heard the impact, although the sound would have taken a second or two to reach me. At the time of the stall, I would estimate his altitude was about 400 feet or slightly less.

After the crash as I walked back to my car, I heard the tower call Operations to send a truck toward the south end of the field. This was about two minutes after the crash. It seemed that the controllers did not immediately know that the crash had occurred. The fire trucks were dispatched about 3 minutes later, but really didn't have anywhere to go since the crash was off-airport.

Some other observations which may be relevant, in no particular order:

I did not see any obvious control inputs as the event unfolded.

The nose of the aircraft appeared to be above the horizon until the final stall/spin.

In my observation, the pilot did not attempt to turn back to the runway.

To me the engine sounded like it had a fuel delivery issue as it cut in and out. I did not hear anything that sounded like a catastrophic failure, nor did I ever see any engine smoke.

During the eight or so laps that he flew while I was there, I neither heard nor saw anything unusual with Zero Alpha Kilo.

At one point the Controller asked the pilot for an early turnout to stay inside another plane making a left turn to the VOR. Other than that, all of his patterns were consistent with his normal flying style.

During touch and go's, when he throttled up, the engine almost always hesitated for a split second as he opened the throttle. I say this because that little hesitation could have become normalized for him and might partially explain his apparent lack of response to the engine trouble.

I did see Zero Alpha Kilo leave the airspace on 4 or 5 occasions over the years. On those flights another person was in the plane with him. They would leave for about 45 minutes and then return. It would be interesting to talk to that person. All I know is that it was an older female. Perhaps someone at PSA would know.

The controllers allowed Zero Alpha Kilo to fly this steep and tight pattern over the years. On several occasions I heard pilots chastised for turning out too early without permission, but Zero AK did the same thing regularly.

The pilot was always very courteous to the controllers and never failed to say "thanks" after every radio transmission. He was a fellow human being who died in a tragic accident doing something he loved. I'm so thankful that no one on the ground was hurt.

I hope this helps your investigation.

Sincerely,
Jim Ambrose

On Tue, Feb 6, 2024 at 8:26 AM [REDACTED] (FAA) [REDACTED] wrote:

Good morning, Jim.

I've been informed that you witnessed the accident on 1/30/2024 at Buchanan Field. If you don't mind, can you please email me your witness statement? Any information, including photos, locations, times, what you saw or heard will be of great benefit to the ongoing investigation. I'm in class this week, so it is hard for me to make phone calls. Once I've received/reviewed your statement, I call and/or email you with any further questions.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Horn, Justin M (FAA)

From: Julie Donoghue <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 9:47 PM
To: [REDACTED] (FAA)
Subject: Re: Witness Statement

About 10:30 am, I and three other golfers were standing at the ninth tee box at Buchanan Golf Course and getting ready to tee off. We were looking south towards the flag, about 300 yards away. A plane flew into view above the trees on the left side of the fairway. The plane was turning left and towards the south. The engine sputtered, seemed to catch for a split second, then glide for a split second, before falling to the ground. The actual impact with the ground was behind trees, so we did not see it, but we did hear the crash.

It all happened within 5 to 10 seconds.

No photos of the actual plane in the air.

(John) Kevin Donoghue

On Feb 6, 2024, at 8:25 AM, [REDACTED] (FAA) <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Good morning, John.

I've been informed that you witnessed the accident on 1/30/2024 at Buchanan Field. If you don't mind, can you please email me your witness statement? Any information, including photos, locations, times, what you saw or heard will be of great benefit to the ongoing investigation. I'm in class this week, so it is hard for me to make phone calls. Once I've received/reviewed your statement, I call and/or email you with any further questions.

Regards,
[REDACTED]