

Michael Hicks
Air Safety Investigator
OAS-WPR

Date: March 17, 2024 - Velazquez
March 18, 2024 - Molina
March 18, 2024 - Holmes

Subject: WPR24FA112 Records of Conversation

Contact: Humberto Molina -Passenger/Buyer N4425L
Jonas Velazquez -Witness
Lillian Holmes- Pilot's next of kin

The following is a synopsis of communication, as relayed to the NTSB Investigator-in-charge, following the accident in experimental amateur-built weight-shift-control aircraft (N4425L).

Humberto Molina

Mr. Molina was in the process of purchasing N4425L. The pilot told him that he had been flying for 30 years and promised to provide him with flight instruction to gain flight experience and understand the flight characteristics of the aircraft. They had flown the aircraft the day prior to the accident and planned to meet the next morning for another flight. The morning of the accident flight, they met at Gila Bend Municipal Airport (E63), Gila Bend, Arizona, and set up the aircraft. The pilot briefed Mr. Molina that they would depart runway 04, conduct a local flight and return to E63, to conduct touch and go takeoff and landings. The pilot briefed that the passenger would fly the approach to runway 04 and transfer the flight controls to the pilot, who would perform the touch and go.

Mr. Molina reported that the flight was conducted as briefed and lasted about 45 minutes. After flying in the local area, they returned to E63 and conducted one approach, where on final, he transferred the flight controls to the pilot who performed a touch and go landing and takeoff. During the second pattern, the pilot transferred the flight controls to the passenger who flew most of the pattern and commenced the approach to runway 04. On the final leg of the airport traffic pattern, the pilot called

out "My airplane" and the passenger relinquished the flight controls. The airplane drifted right of the runway centerline and continued over the unimproved surface to the right (East) of runway 04. The pilot increased the engine power to maneuver the aircraft back to the runway, and the engine sounded strong, with no audible or observable anomalies according to the passenger. The passenger recalled that the approach speed was faster than previous, and he saw the mesquite tree but believed that they would fly over it and continue to the runway. However, the aircraft descended onto the top of the tree and shortly after impacted the improved dirt surface parallel to the runway.

The passenger reported that his only flight experience was in the N4425L but asserted that there was plenty of fuel on board the aircraft, there were no malfunctions associated with the delta wing or the engine prior to impact. Mr. Molina did not know the location of the operating limitations, aircraft maintenance logs, airworthiness certificate, or the aircraft registration.

Jonas Velazquez

Mr. Velazquez reported that the aircraft was attempting to take off. The nose of the aircraft appeared to be too high, then veered right heavily and descended rapidly. He recalled that the aircraft was about 100 ft above ground when it veered to the right side of runway 04 over the trees and pitched up rapidly. The aircraft suddenly rolled left and impacted the ground in a nose down pitch attitude.

Lilliana Holmes

The pilot's wife reported that her husband was in the process of selling the aircraft to the passenger and did not want to sell the aircraft without ensuring that he was capable of flying the aircraft. No insurance information, or aircraft documents were located by Mrs. Holmes during the investigation.

NOTHING FOLLOWS