



**NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
OFFICE OF AVIATION SAFETY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20594**

June 5, 2006

Chalk's Ocean Airways Maintenance Supervisor Interview Notes

- A. ACCIDENT:** DCA06MA010
- LOCATION: Miami, Florida
- DATE/TIME: December 19, 2005, 1439 (EST)
- AIRCRAFT: Grumman Mallard G-73T, N2969, S/N J-27

B. GROUP MEMBERS:

Group Chairman: Pocholo Cruz
National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, DC

Member: Dave Avery
Federal Aviation Administration
Miami, Florida

Member: Luis Carrillo
Chalk's Ocean Airways
Ft. Lauderdale, Florida

C: SUMMARY

On December 19, 2005, at 2:39 pm eastern standard time, a Grumman Mallard G73T, N2969, operated by Flying Boat Inc. as Chalks Ocean Airways flight 101, crashed into a shipping channel adjacent to the Port of Miami shortly after takeoff. The aircraft, a seaplane, had departed from the Miami Seaplane Base (X44), and took off from the shipping channel with 2 crew and 18 passengers (including 3 infants). The scheduled flight was destined to Bimini, Bahamas, operating under the provisions of Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 121. The seaplane was retrofitted with Pratt & Whitney PT-6 turboprop engines. Witness and video recordings indicated a fire on the right wing and showed the wing separating prior to impacting the water. All 20 occupants suffered fatal injuries. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the accident.

The Maintenance Records Group conducted a phone interview with Chalk's Ocean Airways Maintenance Supervisor, Mr. Juan Heredia on June 5, 2006 at the Miami FSDO. Juan was accompanied by his representative, Gregory Sreenan.

D: DETAILS OF THE INVESTIGATION

Mr. Heredia received his Airframe Certificate in October 22, 1981 from Russell King Aviation School, Miami, Florida. Mr. Heredia has been employed by Chalk's Ocean Airways for the past 28 years. Prior to Chalks, he worked for Lockheed Aviation, Burbank, California for 7 years manufacturing parts. Prior to Lockheed Aviation, he worked for a Nordskog Industries at Van Nuys Airport for 7 years as a sheet metal mechanic.

At Chalks, Mr. Heredia started out as a sheet metal mechanic then lead sheet metal mechanic and eventually the Maintenance Supervisor. He has been the maintenance supervisor for the past 26 years. To become the maintenance supervisor, Chalk's did not provide any special training. According to Mr. Heredia, he attended recurrent training yearly in Chalk's General Maintenance Manual and Grumman Manual.

As the Maintenance Supervisor he worked from 0700 to 1530. Prior to the accident, he supervised 3 mechanics. He also mentioned that Chalks operated a mid-shift where a lead mechanic was in charge. During mid-shift, the lead mechanic dealt with all powerplant and electrical issues with the airplanes. If any airframe issues arose, Mr. Heredia was contacted. Mr. Heredia mentioned a turnover log was filled out for both shifts to ensure continuity of work.

According to Mr. Heredia, his day-to-day duties included ensuring all paperwork (routine/non-routine, logbooks, task cards, etc.) from the Airplane Checks and the flying fleet were filled out correctly. He coordinated with the Chief Inspector and Director of Maintenance when issues arose during the day.

Mr. Heredia stated that Chalk's Oceans Airways management gave him all the resources (i.e. airplane parts, manpower) to maintain the airplanes in an airworthy condition.

Mr. Heredia was asked to describe how maintenance checks were accomplished at Chalks Ocean Airways. Mr. Heredia noted that the Chief Inspector or status clerk planned the airplane checks. All ADs and service bulletins were checked and scheduled by the Chief Inspector for the status clerk. The task cards were then sent to the hangar to be worked. Once the airplane arrived at night, mid-shift maintenance personnel removed all the necessary components to accomplish the inspection. Inspection was typically accomplished during the day with routine and non-routine paperwork being generated. Once the check paperwork was finished and checked by Mr. Heredia, they were then sent to the Chief Inspector for final review and were archived. The airplane was then released to service.

With regards to pilot write-ups, Mr. Heredia insisted that all pilots document the discrepancies in the airplane logbooks. To his recollection, Mr. Heredia could not remember a time when a verbal discrepancy was not documented in the airplane logbook.

Mr. Heredia was made aware that during recent interviews with several pilots, who left Chalks early in 2005, cited maintenance issues with Chalks airplanes. Mr. Heredia was familiar with the maintenance issues and recalled that airplane vibration and fuel leaks were just two of the issues. According to Mr. Heredia, Chalks took a systematic approach to solving these discrepancies. Mr. Heredia admitted that from time to time it took several attempts in troubleshooting the airplane to determine the cause and implement a positive fix to the discrepancies.

Mr. Heredia stated that he was present in most of the monthly CASS meeting held by management. Mr. Heredia recalled one instance where management decided to install "plastic coated cables" in the airplanes after a series of cable corrosion discrepancies.

During the interview, Mr. Heredia was asked if he had ever been involved, repaired or supervised any DER structural repairs on the airplanes. Mr. Heredia recalls only one instance but did not elaborate on the specifics and was not involved in the implementation of the structural repair. Furthermore, Mr. Heredia had never dealt with any Instructions for Continued Airworthiness of any structural repairs. Mr. Heredia was unable to demonstrate the knowledge of where to find the definition of a Major Repair.

According to Mr. Heredia, the FAA PMI was at the Chalks facility three or four times a week. During the Aging Airplane Review that was conducted on October/November 2005 for airplane in N2969, Mr. Heredia recalled the FAA PMI inspector identified issues with the airplane and its paperwork. The issues were put on a non-routine paperwork and quickly rectified to the satisfaction of the FAA PMI inspector.

Mr. Heredia was questioned about a major structural repair on the right wing station 34 of airplane N2969. Mr. Heredia did not recall doing the repair nor instructed any sheet metal

mechanics to accomplish the repair. He recalled seeing the repair several times during the airplanes C3 inspection (heavy right wing inspection). He stated, "It must have been done prior to Chalks getting the airplane". Mr. Heredia does not recall seeing any maintenance paperwork for this repair. Furthermore, Mr. Heredia was asked whether any further work was done at the area of the repair. Mr. Heredia recalled one occasion where an external panel had to be resealed due to a fuel leak.

Mr. Heredia was then showed numerous stop drills in the major repair area (Ref. Materials Report 06-010 Figure 6). Mr. Heredia stated that this was the first time he had seen the stop drills. To his recollection he had not instructed any of his mechanics to accomplish an external stop drill repair in that area. Mr. Heredia also noted that the repair looked illegal and did not have the best maintenance practices. Mr. Heredia further noted that he had never been inside nor has he instructed any of his mechanics to go inside the tank to accomplish any repairs in the vicinity of the repair in question.

According to Mr. Heredia, he did not feel any pressure from upper management to keep the airplanes flying no matter what.