



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Stephen Stein
Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Office of Aviation Safety - Eastern Region

NTSB Accident Number: ERA14LA433
Aircraft Registration & Make/Model: N26105; Piper J3C-65
Accident Location: Carroll County, Virginia
Accident Date: September 10, 2014

Note: The following interview was conducted by the Investigator-In-Charge (IIC), Stephen Stein.

Interview Summary #1

Bernard Heimos
Pilot of Accident Airplane

Interview date/time: October 29, 2014; 1400 EDT
Telephone

Interviewer was Stein.

The pilot stated that he was at the end of an annual coast to coast flight that he completes annually. He departed on August 16, 2014 and flew through Texas to New Orleans, LA, Cedar Key, FL, Wake Forest, NC, and Chicago, IL. The pilot then departed Chicago and traveled to Wisconsin, Iowa, Indiana, Ohio, and then Virginia. On the morning of September 10, 2014, the pilot refueled the airplane in Beckley, Virginia and then departed for Winston Salem, NC. The pilot followed the interstate highways, as was his custom during these cross country flights. During this leg he followed Interstate 77 and cruised beneath an overcast cloud layer. The pilot recalled that visibility was about "10 miles" at the time. Eventually a light "mist" developed on the pilot's windscreen and the pilot decided to descend. During the descent the "mist got heavier." The pilot elected to land and descended faster to prepare for an emergency landing on the interstate. He reported that his attention was focused on landing the airplane on the runway

and not on surrounding obstacles. He also remarked that visibility likely diminished further during the rapid descent. The pilot was over the interstate and between trees when the airplane suddenly impacted a tree.

The pilot stated that he usually obtains weather from the application Foreflight, but does not recall if he gathered weather before departing for Winston Salem, NC.

According to the pilot there were no mechanical failures or anomalies with the airplane or engine that could have precluded normal operation.

Stein Stephen

From: Bern Heimos [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, December 11, 2014 1:19 AM
To: Stein Stephen
Subject: Re: Voicemail

Good morning Stephen,

The following is a response to your questions.

1. My last IPC was over 9 years ago.
2. My 1939 Piper J-3 Cub was not IFR certified.
3. My 1939 Piper J-3 Cub had only a wet compass, airspeed indicator, tachometer, altimeter, oil pressure and oil temperature gauge, and no other avionics.
4. My 1939 Piper J-3 Cub did not have an attitude indicator.

The best to you this holiday season!

Sincerely,

Bernard

> On Dec 1, 2014, at 4:29 AM, Stein Stephen [REDACTED] wrote:

>
> Hi Bernard,
>
> Thank you for getting back to me. It might be easier if I gave you the
> follow-up questions over e-mail as some of my questions may require a
> little research.
>
> Here is what I am looking for:
>
> 1) The date of your last IPC.
> 2) The airplane was not IFR certified, correct?
> 3) From the low resolution photos that were sent to me, I was only
> able to make out an airspeed indicator on your instrument panel. Can
> you list the avionics that the airplane was equipped with besides your GPS?
> - Was the airplane equipped with an attitude indicator?
>
> I hope the move goes smoothly. I'll reach out to you in a week to see
> how things are going.
>
> Regards,
>
> Stephen
>

>
> Stephen Stein
> Air Safety Investigator
> National Transportation Safety Board
> Eastern Region Aviation
> 45065 Riverside Parkway
> Ashburn, VA 20147

> [REDACTED]
> [REDACTED]

>
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>
>
>
>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Bernard Heimos [REDACTED]

> Sent: Sunday, November 30, 2014 7:51 PM

> To: Stein Stephen

> Subject: Voicemail

>

> Good morning Stephen,

>

> I trust you had a very nice Thanksgiving weekend. Laurie and I
> certainly had so much to be thankful for.

>

> I received your voicemail. Laurie and I are packing our combined
> households for our 3,000 mile move from California to North Carolina.
> The moving van arrives next week and we are far from completing the
> packing task. I will get in touch with you after we get a handle on
> the packing.

>

> Thanks for your patience,

>

> Bernard

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