

Record of telephone interview of Max Rosenberg

Phone Number: -----

Conducted on October 29, 2008, by Georgia Struhsaker, Senior Air Safety Investigator,
National Transportation Safety Board

Mr. Rosenberg was interviewed regarding an accident near Mammoth Lakes, California, on September 3, 2007, involving a Bellanca 8KCAB-180, N240R.

In response to questions, Mr. Rosenberg provided the following information:

He is the owner of Santa Barbara Aviation. On the day of the accident, he flew a King Air from Santa Barbara to Reno and back to Santa Barbara. He departed about 0730 and reported encountering clear blue skies and no clouds on the flight to Reno. He hit “random clear air turbulence (CAT)” during descent into Reno. The surface wind at Reno was calm. Above 2,500 feet agl, the winds were 30 to 35 knots out of the west (heading 240 to 290). The winds aloft were strong enough that he questioned the tower about the ground winds to confirm they were calm.

He departed Reno about 0930. The wind conditions during the departure were the same as he had on approach – calm on the surface, strong at 2,000 to 3,000 feet agl. He stated this was a very unusual wind condition.

At the request of his passengers, he flew over Yosemite National Park; this route took him to no more than 20 miles from the accident site. He was near the site about 1000 to 1015. It was a “very nice day,” and he cautioned his passengers to wear their seatbelts because of the CAT he had encountered earlier. It was “unusually smooth when it was not turbulent.” About 95% of the time it was smooth. The smooth ride was interrupted by “random rough chop.”

He recalls the day because of it was unusual – “a weird day.” He is familiar with the area and flies into Mammoth Lakes about 50 times a year.

Record of telephone interview of Rich Lober

Phone Number: -----

Conducted on October 29, 2008, by Georgia Struhsaker, Senior Air Safety Investigator,
National Transportation Safety Board

Mr. Lober was interviewed regarding an accident near Mammoth Lakes, California, on September 3, 2007, involving a Bellanca 8KCAB-180, N240R.

In response to questions, Mr. Lober provided the following information:

He has a home in Bishop and often flies across the Sierras. On the morning of the accident, he flew a Cessna 206 from Rio Vista Airport (O88) to the Mammoth Lakes Airport. About 1130, he crossed from west to east near Mt. Ritter (one of the Minarets)

about 2 miles north of the accident site. He was at 13,500 feet. The winds aloft were from the south about 10 knots. There were no clouds and 60 miles visibility. There were no ripples visible on lake surfaces. He did not encounter any “big turbulence,” was not tossed around, and did not have to slow down due to rough air. It was a “wonderful day to go flying.”

Record of telephone interview of David Craig

Phone Number: -----

Conducted on November 3, 2008, by Georgia Struhsaker, Senior Air Safety Investigator, National Transportation Safety Board

Mr. Craig was interviewed regarding an accident near Mammoth Lakes, California, on September 3, 2007, involving a Bellanca 8KCAB-180, N240R.

In response to questions, Mr. Craig provided the following information:

On the day of the accident, he flew his glider from the Bishop Airport. He departed about 1200 and stayed airborne for about 3 hours. During the time he was airborne, he heard the California CAP call on the radio looking for anyone who had seen the accident airplane.

He recalled that it was unusually windy on the ground at Bishop for his takeoff. He recalled the winds were out of the south. Once he got above 10,000 feet, the wind dropped off and the air was smooth. He went soaring over the White Mountains and did not go over the accident area. It was an unusual day.

Record of teleph----- f Bob Sams

Phone Number: -----

Conducted on October 29, 2008, by Georgia Struhsaker, Senior Air Safety Investigator, National Transportation Safety Board

Mr. Sams was interviewed regarding an accident near Mammoth Lakes, California, on September 3, 2007, involving a Bellanca 8KCAB-180, N240R.

In response to questions, Mr. Sams provided the following information:

On the day of the accident, he was camping at East Lake, about 30 miles north of the accident site. His camp was at an elevation of about 9,400 feet, and there are 12,000-foot peaks in the area.

A little before 10 am, he saw an airplane that he believes was the accident airplane. The airplane was flying from north to south, heading towards Yosemite. When he saw it the airplane was about ½ mile north of the camp at an altitude of about 11,500 feet. He pointed the airplane out to the people he was camping with and they saw it also.

It had been very windy during the night and in the morning. The wind was out of the southwest. The airplane was heading into the wind, and it looked like it was standing still due to the wind.

When the camping trip was over, he saw pictures of the accident airplane on television and identified it as the airplane he observed.