



MEMORANDUM for RECORD

Ralph E. Hicks
Senior Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

Date: February 8, 2016

Person Contacted: Mr. Harry Bous, [REDACTED], Cayce, SC 29033 (Cell [REDACTED])

– Flight Instructor to Joseph Johnson (Cessna 150 Pilot)

NTSB Accident Number: ERA15MA259AB – Moncks Corner, SC

This investigator interviewed Mr. Bous by telephone. He reported the following:

- Mr. Bous is a career pilot, flying commercial and a flight instructor. He possesses ATP and flight instructor certificates. He reported about 23,000 hours of flight time, spanning 40 years.
- He met Mr. Johnson on an introductory flight and began training with him soon thereafter. Mr. Johnson had flown a little before their first flight, but not a significant amount. Mr. Johnson was a professional baseball player and injuries led him to the aviation field. Mr. Johnson eventually wanted to be an airline pilot. Mr. Johnson was also a baggage handler at Delta in Charleston and that is how he became interested in the airlines. He liked aviation.
- Mr. Bous described Mr. Johnson as a “good student” and a “good pilot.” Mr. Johnson progressed quickly through his private pilot rating. He described him as “very careful, studious, conscientious, highly motivated, and responsive.” He was always prepared for his instructional flights. Mr. Bous continued to fly with Mr. Johnson after he received his private pilot certificate, working with him on his instrument and eventually his commercial ratings. Mr. Johnson built time by flying with his father, who was on board with him at the time of the accident.
- Except for a few initial flights in a Piper PA-28-140, they flew together in Mr. Johnson’s Cessna 150. Mr. Bous helped him find and acquire the Cessna.
- Mr. Bous began flying with Mr. Johnson in 2013. Mr. Johnson briefly took a break and enrolled in a flight school in Florida. He did not recall the name of the school. He

returned to South Carolina after a short period of time because the flight school was not working out financially. It was very expensive and Mr. Johnson was careful with how he spent his money on training. They resumed their training together in the latter part of 2014.

- Mr. Johnson always checked the weather and NOTAMS, particularly TFRs. His airplane was equipped with a King 155 radio, GPS, and he also utilized his cell phone and a tablet for flight planning and in-flight use.
- Mr. Johnson had been a model airplane builder for years. He maintained a hangar full of aircraft in all sizes and complexities.
- During instructional flights, Mr. Johnson displayed a strong “see and avoid” discipline. His situational awareness and his traffic acquisition skills were also very good. Mr. Johnson worked in the Charleston area and flew out of Orangeburg, SC often; they would meet there to begin their flights. Mr. Johnson was very aware of the military traffic both from Shaw and from Charleston AFB and this was a routine topic of conversation on their flights. Mr. Bous noted that they were usually above the Shaw traffic when they flew.
- Mr. Johnson was a tall man, probably 6-foot-2 or -3. He sat up high in the airplane and never expressed any difficulties seeing out of it.
- Mr. Johnson always used flight following when it was appropriate. He “enjoyed” talking to ATC and was very aware of the benefits, especially when transiting Charleston airspace when he flew his frequent flights to Beaufort, SC. He would call CHS for weather and traffic updates. Mr. Bous lent him a hand-held aviation radio during his training so that he could listen to ATC and better learn the terminology. He would contact ATC for flight following without being prompted. Mr. Johnson wanted to eventually fly for the airlines and talking with ATC helped him prepare for that.