



## **NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD**

Office of Aviation Safety  
Washington, D.C. 20594

March 17, 2016

### **Attachment 10 – SkyKing Check Airman Interview**

# **OPERATIONAL FACTORS**

**CEN16MA036**

## **Record of phone conversation between Captain David Lawrence (NTSB) and Captain Naresh Maharaj (Songbird Airways)**

Date: February 16, 2016

Time: 1505 CST

Name and contact information:

Captain Naresh Maharaj

██████████

██████████

Miami, FL 33132

Primary Work Phone (321) ██████████

Primary Home Phone (Private) (954) ██████████

Notes from conversation:<sup>1</sup>

SkyKing was now known as Songbird Airways. AerSale was the parent company.

He was one of Renato's check airmen and instructor for his initial pilot class. Boeing 737-400 simulator training was conducted at Pan Am Academy in Miami, Florida. Renato passed the B737 type rating ride in the simulator.

Marco Formachetti was the former SkyKing captain, and Renato was his cousin. Renato was hired as an internal reference. Himself and Hector Gonzales, another check airman, conducted Renato's initial interview and expressed concerns to the Angel Mercano, the new chief pilot, that Renato did not the flight time and international experience necessary for the company. It was the chief pilot's decision to go ahead with the interview. He conducted initial training for Renato, asked limitations questions, memory items, and asked questions on profiles. During week 2, based on the obvious that he was behind and not studying the required material, it was clear he was not studying at home. During the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of Renato's training, he recommended to cut Renato loose from training, but the chief pilot decided to keep him. In simulator training, others observed Renato's weaknesses.

Before the scheduled day of the check ride, he told the Chief Pilot that Renatto was not ready for a check ride and also that he is refusing to conduct the Check Ride. On the day of Renato's type rating check ride, an FAA inspector was present to conduct his own PC check airman ride. The chief pilot then conducted the check ride and he was in the right seat for seat-support with the FAA inspector in the simulator. The chief pilot and FAA inspector accepted Renato's performance as passing, and the check ride was complete.

They suspended IOE training in January due to weather issues, and the former chief pilot left and he assumed the role of interim chief pilot.

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<sup>1</sup> Captain Maharaj was given an opportunity to review and correct the draft notes of this conversation, and his response and edits, received Wednesday, February 24, 2016 11:50 PM, are incorporated in this account.

When IOE commenced, Renato was scheduled to conduct observation of other pilot's IOE from the jumpseat. This was arrangement agreed upon by the former Chief Pilot, Angel Marcano and the Director of Operations, which was "unheard of for Part 121 operators." Renato received 7 separate days of observation work. Before Renato started IOE from the right seat, it was apparent Renato wasn't taking the steps necessary to study and progress. When he became the chief pilot, he decided to terminate Renato's employment for failure to progress in training.

After his check ride, he provided counsel to Renato, and was told Renato had a new baby, and had some difficulties at home and not much opportunity to study.

In the simulator, Renato was not just weak but "ridiculously weak," and his training exceeded the normal footprint of typical pilots.

He said he was never contacted by anyone from Execuflyght about the letter he wrote detailing Renato's lack of progression in training at SkyKing, and never received any calls from Execuflyght regarding Renato, even though Execuflyght had the SkyKing employment records.

Conversation concluded at 1545 CST.