



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Michael Huhn
Air Safety Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Date: June 29, 2013
Person Contacted: Mr. Edward Nielsen (IMSAR Pilot)
NTSB Accident Number: WPR13FA294

Attendees:

Michael Huhn – NTSB
Ricardo Asensio – Cessna Aircraft Company

Narrative:

The following is a synopsis of the information provided by Mr. Nielsen during an in-person interview on this date:

Full Name: Edward Nielsen
Position/Title: Pilot
Reports to: Andre Young/Ryan Smith/ Josh Hintze/ Adam Robertson

- How long at IMSAR: April 2012
- How long in current position: April 2012
- Function/Capacity/Responsibilities: Aircraft Mx, Security, Pilot, Building/facility maintenance
- Grant Young (required crew member/test engineer) reports to Mr. Nielsen

- Mr. Nielsen never deals with DoD personnel
- IMSAR trickles down policy to Mr. Nielsen but he doesn't know original source

- Mr. Nielsen types up FAA Form 337 (dictated by Tom Woodhouse)
 - Woodhouse is an IA who owns airport property, and rents the hangar to IMSAR
 - Tom's son Brett sometimes does the work
 - Tom gets the 337 (modification) approved by FAA
 - Stan Ritter (SLC FSDO) will communicate w Tom Woodhouse/Edward Nielsen to get clarifications for 337s as required

- No FAA personnel assigned for dedicated IMSAR oversight
- All IMSAR test operations are FAR Part 91

- Edward Nielsen, Tom Woodhouse, Brett Woodhouse, and "very rarely" Zim Weakly are the only people who work on the IMSAR airplanes
- Approximately 8-10 people have access to hangar (for demo/test purposes)
- Those personnel cannot touch (move) airplanes without Mr. Nielsen's permission
- Grant Young does scheduling for the airplanes (via a white board in office) plus longer term electronic version
 - Engineering & manufacturing can make requests for pilots and airplanes
 - Mr. Nielsen is the primary IMSAR pilot (Greg Soter is second, then Matt Pitts)
 - Mr. Nielsen flew w both pilots to familiarize w rotes/products/procedures
 - Airplanes can be taken off line by any pilot
 - Flight log (red) is kept in airplane (not located during investigation)
 - Squawks may or may not be written down
 - Mr. Nielsen makes copies of logs every Friday night and provides to IMSAR employee Ashley Werner
 - Ashley issues reminders to techs for repetitive maintenance items
 - Post flight, flying pilot provides relevant operating information to Grant Young
 - Mr. Nielsen is supposed to be informed about every debrief
 - IMSAR does not have any airplane grounding forms
 - Ignition keys are always left in the airplanes when the airplanes are not being flown (Not in the ignition switches)
- Mr. Nielsen's synoptic knowledge of/role in accident airplane (N4495R) preparations
 - IMSAR purchased airplane
 - Airplane had a Standard A/W cert
 - IMSAR personnel and Tom Woodhouse submitted FAA Form337s, obtained FAA approvals, and accomplished the modification work
 - Tom Woodhouse fabricated & generally installed parts
 - Mr. Nielsen assisted or conducted second (mirror) installation on sister ship
- Gray (Distribution) Box history synopsis
 - Engineers (Josh Hintze, Peter Weir, Walt Johnson, Mark Catanzaro) put together parts list.
 - Mr. Nielsen purchased parts (with engineers' guidance)
 - Mr. Nielsen provided parts to Zim Weakly
 - Zim Weakly assembled unit, based on Engineering drawings
 - QA process: (manufacturing/Andy May is head)- Mr. Nielsen was unaware of the specifics
 - QA checked functionality in factory functional duplicate of hardware
 - Then box was tested on airplane- Engineers (Mark) with Mr. Nielsen
 - Unknown other activity

- Mr. Nielsen's Isolator knowledge
 - Device intended to separate the Supplemental/SAR electrical power system isolated from ships power
 - 28v hardware could not be flown on airplane until isolator installed
 - Baggage door radar was 12v; wing pod radars were 28v systems
 - Mr. Nielsen had no direct knowledge of the isolator installation

- Mr. Nielsen requested that Greg Soter fly the flights with the system in the configuration that it was on the day of the accident because of a conflicting work assignment
 - There were five of these flights scheduled, all beginning about 7am
 - These were to be on 6/27, 6/28, and 7/1, 7/2, and 7/3 [2013]
- Mr. Nielsen knew that Gerald Wilson would be flying as the test engineer
- Mr. Wilson had good knowledge of the supplemental power system
- Mr. Nielsen thinks he flew with the isolator installed but he had no specific record of such.
- Mr. Nielsen's only interface with Mr. Soter on the accident day was a fuel card discussion and the SAR [radar] units
- Mr. Nielsen provided Mr. Soter with verbal instructions re the electronics
 - His guidance primarily consisted of the discussion of the red switch [Battery switch]; turn the switch "ON" and leave it as is
- There were no specific discussions between Mr. Nielsen and Mr. Soter re the supplemental power system during assignment of the five planned flights

- When asked, Mr. Nielsen estimated that the pilot (Mr. Soter) was about 5'6" tall and weighed about 160 lbs
- When asked, Mr. Nielsen estimated that the test engineer (Mr. Wilson) was about 6' tall and weighed about 300 lbs

- IMSAR does not have hardcopy/formal flight operations manual
- Normally, the only time the pilots communicate with ATC is during departures and arrivals into U77, on the CTAF frequency
- Occasionally the pilots will communicate with or monitor SLC approach
- When required, SLC will assign discrete transponder codes
- The pilots/crews also occasionally communicate with IMSAR on 122.6 to discuss test procedures
- Normally they do not file any flight plans, but will utilize flight following when possible

- Tom Woodhouse knew the [additional 12v wet cell] battery was in the airplane
- Mr. Nielsen was unsure about Woodhouse's knowledge of the isolator

- Pilots are typically responsible for obtaining their own weather briefings
- All IMSAR flights depart with full fuel
- The fuel (Avgas) is purchased from Utah Aviation, which is located near the IMSAR hangar