



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Michael Huhn
Air Safety Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Dates: May 23, 2018
Persons Contacted: Mr. Jim Sprandel
NTSB Accident Number: WPR18FA143

Narrative:

The following is a synopsis of the information provided by Mr. Sprandel in a telephone conversation on the noted date.

- Mr. Sprandel lives in the Midwest US
- Mr. Sprandel owns a similar glider from the same manufacturer
 - His was a 29D2, and the accident airplane was a 29D
 - They were also different model years
 - He was not aware of whether or how the two wing installations compared to one another, except that they were generally and conceptually similar
- He made the pilot's acquaintance via Facebook, apparently in response to the pilot's request for assistance/information re the aircraft assembly (wing installation) procedure
- The contact between the two was made on Friday May 18, the day prior to the accident
- Mr. Sprandel explained the basic wing installation/mechanism to this IIC. Highlights included:
 - Description of central pin, cone nuts and clevis assemblies
 - Description of pin rotating tool and storage/locking accommodation
 - Description of basic techniques and number of persons required to assemble
 - 3 people is preferred; 1/wing and 1 at join location
 - Rotate the pin until secure - "tighten until you cannot do it any more"
 - Description of assembly tools: 2 noted
 - a "lug/camming wrench" which is used to pull the wings towards one another inside the airplane
 - The hex/allen wrench used to rotate the central pin, and lock it in place upon reaching proper setting/security
- He stated that the pilot told him that he rotated the pin "6 to 8 turns" before the pin was appropriately torqued, and seemed secure
- Mr. Sprandel had assembled his airplane several years ago, with no interim disassembly, so he did not recall the number of pin turns required to secure the wings

- The pilot told him that after that, the "wings still moved"
 - He did not elaborate on direction(s) or travel distance(s)
- The pilot then adjusted the forward "lift pins" with the result that the wings now appeared secure/immovable
 - No other details were available
- Mr. Sprandel described the "lift pins" as 4 small stubs (2/wing, 1 fwd and 1 aft) that mounted on the wing root and protruded inboard, to nest in "cups" (sockets/receptacles) on the fuselage
- He stated that in his experience, on assembly, one cannot push the wings together without the camming wrench
- The pilot did possess a camming wrench, but did not need it
 - The pilot told Mr. Sprandel that the wings "went together too easily"
 - Because of this, the pilot reportedly telephoned the glider's previous owner
 - No details of that conversation were known by Mr. Sprandel
- Mr. Sprandel stated that, including the accident airplane, there was a total of 6 Lark gliders in the US at the current time
- Mr. Sprandel stated that to his knowledge, the pilot had not communicated with any of the other Lark owners in the US