



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Michael Huhn
Air Safety Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Date: October 4, 2010
Person Contacted: Mr. James Sabovich (PIC/Owner)
NTSB Accident Number: WPR11FA002

Narrative:

The following is a summary of the information obtained in a telephone conversation with Mr. Sabovich on this date:

- Mr. Sabovich was the pilot in command (PIC) for the accident flight
- There were 2 passengers on board
- He and the passengers were long-term friends
- The passengers were husband and wife; Mr. Jeff Williams (front right seat) and Mrs. Christie Williams (rear seat)
- The pilot/airplane flew into Avalon/Catalina (AVX) from SNA (Santa Ana/John Wayne) to pick up the passengers, and then continue to SBP (San Luis County Regional)
- The pilot shut down the airplane and had an abbreviated lunch at the airport with the passengers
- The PIC was not IFR rated
- During lunch, the pilot noticed that there was "fog coming in" to AVX, and therefore he wanted to "get out [of AVX] quickly"
- Passenger boarding occurred about 3 pm
- Start up and taxi out were normal
- The pilot selected runway 22 as the departure runway
- The pilot did not mention, and was not asked, whether he conducted engine run-ups, either at SNA or at AVX
- The PIC said that he planned to do a "Vx climb" out of AVX
- The pilot stated that the takeoff configuration for this departure was approximately 15 to 20 degrees of flaps
- About "1 to 3 seconds after rotation" the airplane "yawed sharply to the left"
- At this time the airplane was at 85-90 mph, which was Vx and also Vmc

- The pilot knew that the airplane would not climb in this "dirty" [gear and flaps down] configuration at this speed
- He therefore pushed the nose down to "keep the speed up"
- The airplane "entered the fog" which the pilot likened to "a whiteout"
- He said the "right wing began coming up," so he "pulled the power back on the right engine," and the wing began to come down
- He said the airplane "was out of control"
- He said that he might have manipulated the throttles and propeller controls more than that, but he could not recall
- He was certain that he did not have time to feather the left propeller
- He "saw the ground" and instinctively "pulled back on the yoke"
- He believes that he then blacked out, and didn't know whether it was only a second or two, or much longer
- The next thing he was aware of was that the airplane was stopped and "orange flames" filled his view out the windshield
- The right seat passenger told the pilot that he could not open the door
- The pilot then helped the passenger open the door
- The passenger then "took the brunt of the flames" with his back
- The airplane was not equipped with shoulder harnesses, only lap belts
- The pilot "shoved the [front seat] passenger out" of the airplane
- The rear seat passenger could not get her seat belt unfastened
- The rear seat passenger was screaming for help, so the pilot then assisted her with her lap belt and exiting the airplane
- After exiting the cabin, both passengers ended up forward of the airplane wing
- All three people walked/ran "about 50 feet away" from the airplane for safety
- The Catalina Conservancy rangers arrived about 10 minutes after the accident
- The pilots flight logs were in the airplane
- The maintenance records were in the possession of the mechanic/organization that conducted the most recent annual inspection
- The most recent annual inspection was conducted approximately March 2010 by Mr. Cody Thompson of Thompson Air
- Thompson Air went out of business sometime after the annual inspection
- The PIC stated that he was diligent about practicing emergency procedures, and practiced engine failures on takeoff about once per month