



RECORD OF CONVERSATIONS

Michael Huhn
Air Safety Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Dates: May 19-21, 2018
Persons Contacted: Various
NTSB Accident Number: WPR18FA143

Narrative:

The following is a synopsis of the information provided by multiple persons in multiple telephone conversations on the noted dates. Calls are in sequence earliest to latest.

May 19

Deputy Chris Faiman (Kings Cty Sheriff's Office. Not at site; at launch airport)

- Glider launched at 1227 pm today
- Club heard from pilot about 1 hr later- all OK
- No more comms/no return
- Club plane w 2 POB launched at 1830 to find
- Found wreckage in 2 locs ¼ mile apart (wing + remainder on opposite sides of ridge)
- Wreckages approx. 1000' down very steep ridge from access road
- 35° 56 12.5 -120° 13 00.6

James Rickey (Club member/tow pilot/director of Mx. Not at site; at launch airport)

- Central California Soaring Club
- Pilot: Jan Zanuito
- Pilot's airplane, not Club airplane
- ICA-Brasov IS-29
- Pilot's first flight in this AC
- Deptd out of Avenal Glider Port (CA69)
- Dan Gudgel (other club member) reported ax to NTSB & FAA- Not sure who he spoke with

May 20

Troy Wise (FAA Fresno FSDO)

- Ryan Smith will be other FAA inspector
- Pilot had called Troy/Fresno FSDO a while back asking about this AC that he was interested in purchasing, and its supposed life limits, and whether that limit was applicable in US

- AC mfgd in Romania
- FAA told pilot they'd need relevant data before rendering decision

Rick Eason (co-owner)

- The airplane was purchased a few months ago from owner in KS
- AC trailered to CA (Merced, one of the co-owners' home towns)
- AC had not been flown in 6-8 years
- Pilot was also A&P/IA ("incredibly competent")
- The new co-owners "thoroughly" inspected aircraft post purchase
- The AC was then trailered to Fresno where it was inspected again
- Then it was trailered to CA69 and assembled by pilot w co-owner assistance
- Pilot had a 1 YO parachute that was recently repacked by pilot
- The searching tow pilot thought he saw a chute (on ground) near the wreckage
- The pilot wore a GPS tracking device on a lanyard around his neck
- The two co-owners also co-owned another glider, a Grob
- The pilot was a very experienced glider pilot, much more so than Mr. Eason
- The accident flight was the first flight of the airplane since its purchase by these two
- The pilot also had a mobile phone with him with an App that allowed his wife to see his location
- The wife sent a screen shot to Mr Eason re which she stated that the location of the pilot/AC had not changed in a long time
- Cal Fire personnel were the ones who reportedly first accessed the wreckage on the ground, and confirmed the pilot fatality

May 21

Chief Manuel DaFonte (Kings County FD)

- Not at site; supervised access recovery from ridge road
- Pilot/main site was about 500' down from ridge road
- Accessible on foot to "moderate" hiker, but ropes help descent & ascent
- Noone went down to wing etc on 'other' side of ridge
- Personnel did take photos on scene, but all at night
- Body recovery began approx. 330 am morning of 5/20
- Primary LEO contact Det Samuel Weimer (was on site)
- Secondary Det Sgt Mark Lusk
- Coroner:

Jeremiah Gilson (Coroner, Kings County Sheriff Office)

- Responded to site
- Pilot w partially opened chute found "not far" from aircraft
- No mobile phone observed/recovered
- Lanyard on pilot but no tracking device attached; not recovered