

Gulfstream G-150, N480JJ
Key West, Florida
October 31, 2011
ERA12FA056

National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, D.C.

Attachment 1

Interview Summaries

5 Pages

INTERVIEW SUMMARIES

Accident No.: ERA12FA056

Mr. Jim Klepper, Hendrick Motor Sports was interviewed via telephone by Nora Marshall on Tuesday, November 29, 201.

Mr. Klepper was the captain on the accident flight.

He was seated in the left seat and was using a 5-point restraint system. He stated that he remembered one or two hard impacts but his restraint system worked very well. His injuries included "muscle pulls" and "back strain" but he did not have any seatbelt bruising and there was "not a mark on me." He strongly believed that his 5-point restraint system, that he had adjusted tightly, was instrumental in protecting him from injury.

He changed his habits with his restraint system as after seeing a video of an accident involving another NASCAR owner at Oshkosh. The video showed a pilot exiting an airplane after an accident with a bloodied face, and he later learned that the pilot had a severe eye injury that caused him to lose sight in the injured eye. Prior to seeing the video he had not always made an effort to tighten his restraint system, but after seeing the video, he made a conscious effort to make sure his restraint system was tight.

During the impact sequence he thought there were one or two hard impacts when the airplane hit the road and/or a berm. Those impacts caused him to feel as if "the breath had been knocked out of him" and he felt like he almost could not move. He was in a dazed state after the accident and he did not remember everything that happened after the airplane stopped. For example, he did not remember the F/O and the passengers exiting but he did remember knowing that they were out of the airplane because he recalled seeing them outside the airplane on the left side.

He was very pleased with the airplane and the ease of getting out of the airplane. Although the main cabin door did not open all the way, it opened far enough that he could step out of the airplane without a problem.

Initially there was normal cabin lighting because the engines were running. He did not activate the emergency lighting, however once the engines were shut down he noticed that the emergency lights came on. As he continued to "shut down," the cockpit became dark and he used the flashlight from behind the first officer's seat to find switches.

There was a flashlight mounted behind both of the pilot seats. It was easier for him to reach the flashlight behind the F/O's seat because he did not have to twist around to get the one behind his seat. Because he was hurt he was not sure if he could have turned around to get the one behind his seat, but the one behind the F/O's seat was easy to reach.

When the airplane stopped he felt like he was in a state of denial “for a moment.” He was “achy” and “dazed” and it took him longer than he expected to “clear the cobwebs” but he knew that he had to focus on the passengers and the airplane.

He had 25 years of training that taught him to go through his checklist but it “takes a second” to know where you are and what just happened. In training, a student does not experience the sense of trying to figure out where you are and what just happened.

He felt that emergency training previously received as an air carrier pilot was an added benefit.

Part 91 training does not emphasize evacuation scenarios; rather, it emphasizes running checklists and operating doors. His training for emergency evacuation had always been in a “picture perfect” setting. For example, the training was in a climate-controlled, well-lit environment with equipment properly positioned. Evacuation training was conducted in well-lit conditions where a student can walk up to the door and see everything rather than the dark situation he experienced in the accident. His training did not include situations such as the one he experienced where the airplane was tilted and the lighting was poor.

A firefighter came into the cockpit and said “sir, sir, we need to get you out” and the captain responded that he needed to catch his breath. The captain was able to get out of the seat in a “normal” manner and the firefighter helped him out of the airplane. The firefighter “walked him out” of the airplane and helped steady him but the captain was able to get out of his seat and move on his own.

Once they were out of the airplane the firefighter wanted him to “sit down” but he did not want to sit down until he checked on the passengers. The firefighter walked him to where the passengers and F/O were located. The firefighter had a very calming voice and did his job professionally. Even when the captain did not want to take the firefighters advice to sit down, the firefighter was very professional. The captain realized that he was not doing what the firefighter wanted him to do and might have seemed difficult for the firefighter, but he understood that the firefighter was “just doing his job.” He thought that the firefighter understood that the captain was not taking his advice because he really wanted to check on the passengers.

He thought that ARFF arrived very quickly and described their performance as “excellent” and “outstanding.” He said it looked like they were performing a training exercise.

He stated that a fire extinguisher in the cockpit came out of its brackets during the accident but he did not remember where it was found. He did not observe the empty bracket during his evacuation but learned of it after the accident when someone asked him about it and he saw photos of the empty bracket.

He was very surprised when he heard that an entertainment system remote control that is normally stowed in the lavatory came out of its cradle and ended up in the cabin. One of the passengers took it with them when they evacuated.

Mr. Jay Luckwaldt, Hendrick Motor Sport, was interviewed via telephone by Nora Marshall on November 22, 2011.

Mr. Luckwaldt was the First Officer (F/O) on the accident flight.

When the airplane stopped he released his 5-point restraint and exited the cockpit to help the passengers. He is not sure whether he actually told the captain that he would take the passengers to the left side (where the captain could see them) or he just thought that he told him because that was the procedure highlighted in their emergency evacuation training.

He exited the cockpit and opened the main cabin door. Because the fuselage was on its belly, the door was "parallel" to the ground. He quickly stuck his head outside to assess the outside environment around the door. He saw that the left wing was in a small pond or salt flat, and that the exit was usable.

When he opened the main cabin door it "popped open" with "no problem." He used a handle to the right of the door to open it. He grasped a lever and used his thumb to unlatch the small latch, then raised the handle up toward the ceiling and the door popped open and fell out (from top to bottom). Opening the door is a mechanical operation and the door operates in the same manner for normal and emergency situations.

He went into the cabin to help the passengers and noted that the male passenger was still in his seat and the seat was tipped over, laying on its right side. The male passenger was in the process of getting up and when he stood up he was holding his chest.

The female passenger said that she smelled fuel and the F/O got them up and got them out through the main boarding door. They moved to the left side of the airplane. He estimated that they were about 50 feet from the airplane - which was as far away as they could physically move away from the left side of the airplane.

When he exited, he felt water spray and noted that the left engine was still in full reverse.

He went back into the cabin because the captain had not evacuated. The captain was shutting down the engines and the F/O asked if he was okay, or hurt, or injured. (He did not remember the exact words) but the captain said "Yes, I am okay but I can't breathe" The captain told the F/O that he "was coming" and the F/O exited the airplane again.

The F/O thought that he should get the passengers to the service road on the right side of the airplane because the emergency equipment would travel to the accident site via that road, and the passengers would be located closer to the emergency responders when they arrived. He did not observe any fire, nor did he smell any smoke, and he led the passengers to the other side of the airplane by walking in front of the airplane's nose. The airplane had slid right up to the boundary fence but there was room to walk in front of the airplane to get to the service road.

He returned to the airplane and the captain was still in the airplane shutting down switches. He told the captain that he needed to evacuate and the F/O asked him a question such as "Do I need to pull you out" and the captain told him "I am coming."

The F/O exited the airplane and went to the service road where the passengers were located. The captain joined them shortly after the F/O returned to the service road.

When asked if he was injured he stated that he had a slight bruise on his right elbow and that he had some muscle strain. He thought that he "wrenched" his back when they went over a berm. He almost did not go to the hospital because he did not think he was hurt, but he decided to go to the hospital after he bent over to talk to the captain (who had been placed on a backboard) and then stood up and felt a knife-like pain in his back.

Although he had not had training for the specific situation of this accident (night landing, short runway and no brakes) he felt that he had received good evacuation training at Flight Safety. Although this was not an emergency in which they had time to "brief" before the emergency – he relied on his training and followed his procedures.

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ARFF Captain Cletta, and Firefighter (FF) Horton were interviewed by Nora Marshall on January 23, 2012. Their interviews are summarized below.

Captain Cletta

He was questioned about the ARFF report and Airport Manager's report to FAA and the time of the ARFF Station 7 arrival time. He indicated that the time in the Airport Manager's report to FAA was accurate for Station 7 response and the time listed in the document indicated a time that more logically fit the arrival of STA 8. He confirmed that 3 ARFF personnel responded immediately from STA 7 and that STA 8 also responded with 3 personnel; one engine and one ambulance.

He stated that FF Horton entered the airplane and assisted a crewmember off the airplane.

He also responded to the Cessna Citation overrun that went into the EMAS four days after the G-150 accident.

When asked if he had any suggestions or concerns, he reported that he was concerned about the number of personnel at the ARFF station and thought that additional ARFF personnel were needed. For example, during the G-150 accident, they had three personnel to handle firefighting and four patients. During the G-150 accident there were 3 personnel on duty and they took 3 vehicles, but the station is "frequently" staffed with two people and he was concerned that was not enough staff, especially if there was an air carrier accident. If there are only two personnel at the station, one firefighting vehicle remains at the station. Station 8 is approximately 2 to 3 miles away from the ARFF station.

Firefighter Horton:

He entered the airplane and saw the captain shutting down the airplane. When the captain was out of his seat he was "stumbling around." The captain was walking on his own but FF Horton helped him off the airplane and escorted him to the staging area at the access road which was about 100 feet from the airplane.

FF Horton did not do anything to shut down the airplane because the captain had taken care of it.