

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

## NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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JANUARY 10, 2014

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CESSNA 310R, N3829G,

\* Docket No.: CEN14FA110

ROYAL AIR FLIGHT 907

\*

PONTIAC, MICHIGAN

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Interview of: KIRT KOSTICH

Waterford Police Department  
 5150 Civic Center Drive  
 Waterford, Michigan

Wednesday,  
 March 12, 2014

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice.

BEFORE: MITCHELL GALLO  
 Accident Investigator

## APPEARANCES:

MITCHELL GALLO, Accident Investigator  
Office of Aviation Safety  
National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB)

E. BARRY ROGERS, Aviation Safety Inspector  
Air Carrier - Operations  
Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)  
East Michigan Flight Standards District Office  
Belleville, Michigan

BARTHOLEMEW ANGLE, Aviation Safety Inspector  
General Aviation - Operations  
Federal Aviation Administration  
East Michigan Flight Standards District Office  
Belleville, Michigan

DEAN G. GREENBLATT, ESQ.  
Dean G. Greenblatt, PLC  
(Representative on behalf of Mr. Kostich)

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I N T E R V I E W

(8:13 a.m.)

MR. GALLO: All right, let's begin. Thank you,  
Mr. Kostich, for joining us today early in the morning.

INTERVIEW OF KIRT KOSTICH

BY MR. GALLO:

Q. I would just like to start off, if you could describe  
what your position is in the company, what your duties are in that  
position?

A. Director of operations.

Q. And how long have you held that position?

A. I don't even know the exact date. A long time.

Q. Estimate, in years?

A. You know, I should have looked at my records before I  
came but I've just been there so long; you know, started as a  
pilot, went to chief pilot, then went to director of ops. But at  
least 10 years or more.

Q. Okay, and what did you do prior to being director of  
operations?

A. Chief pilot.

Q. Can you describe what your typical work schedule is like  
during the week?

A. Pretty much 9 to 6, 9 to 5:30. It varies.

Q. And do you work on the weekends also?

A. A little, not much. Typically I actually swim Saturday

1 morning and then have breakfast, then sometimes I come in and do  
2 some stuff.

3 Q. And in regards to Mr. Andy Demos, when was the last time  
4 you talked to him?

5 A. Probably early -- or the later part of December, because  
6 I went on vacation with my boys, I think, December -- we got back  
7 December 22nd, so we probably left December -- I'm not sure when  
8 we left. But anyhow, then after that it's Christmas holiday, so I  
9 didn't talk to Andy for quite a while.

10 Q. And what do you talk to him about?

11 A. I -- what do you mean? When?

12 Q. Well, when you're -- in your last time that you saw him.

13 A. In early -- in late December? You know, it might even  
14 have been at our Christmas party. Then we just talked stuff. You  
15 know, I don't recall.

16 Q. And what were your impressions of Mr. Demos?

17 A. Good guy. Intelligent, good pilot.

18 Q. Were there any -- did he have any deficiencies that you  
19 noted during his training?

20 A. No.

21 Q. Why was Royal Air trying to fill the position that was  
22 eventually occupied by Mr. Demos?

23 A. We've always been short pilots, short 310 pilots.

24 Q. And do you know how many other applicants were  
25 considered for the position that Mr. Demos eventually filled?

1           A.    No, not really.

2           Q.    Was he the only applicant that was brought in for an  
3 interview for that position?

4           A.    You know, I don't really recall.  Ron was kind of  
5 handling that.

6           Q.    When Mr. Demos came in for his interview did you have a  
7 chance to talk to him?

8           A.    I believe I did, after Ron did.

9           Q.    And do you recall what was discussed during that?

10          A.    Not really.

11          Q.    During that interview with Mr. Demos, do you know who  
12 flew with him on that day?

13          A.    Ron did.

14          Q.    And did you talk to Ron about that flight?

15          A.    Yeah, I think when they got back Ron just mentioned that  
16 he did a really good job.

17          Q.    And when was the decision made to hire Mr. Demos?

18          A.    I believe it was that day after Ron flew with him and  
19 talked to him.

20          Q.    Do you normally have interviews with flights involved,  
21 where you fly with the applicant on the same day?

22          A.    Yeah, we prefer to always fly with someone before we  
23 hire them to see if they can fly or not.

24          Q.    And do you know how long that interview lasted on that  
25 day?

1           A.    Quite a while, but I don't know the exact time now.

2           Q.    Do you know who, maybe, other people were that talked to  
3 Mr. Demos on the day he came in for the interview?

4           A.    It would have just been Ron and myself, to my knowledge.

5           Q.    Do you know if anybody called Mr. Demos's previous  
6 employers for references?

7           A.    I don't know.

8           Q.    Going to Mr. Demos' training, who were the instructors  
9 that trained him?

10          A.    Ron and myself.

11          Q.    And how much time did you spend training Mr. Demos?

12          A.    Myself?

13          Q.    Yes.

14          A.    I'd have to look at the records. I don't recall.

15          Q.    Okay, and can you describe the ground training that you  
16 gave him, if any?

17          A.    Oh, I was involved just a couple times, really, and I  
18 know I did -- I remember doing some fuel system with him, and then  
19 like some special subject stuff.

20               MR. GREENBLATT: Just to clarify, you're asking  
21 questions about what Mr. Kostich provided personally or Royal Air  
22 generally, with that question?

23               MR. GALLO: Well, I'm asking what he provided.

24               MR. KOSTICH: Personally.

25               MR. GALLO: Personally.

1 MR. GREENBLATT: Okay.

2 MR. KOSTICH: That's the way I took it.

3 MR. GREENBLATT: Just to be clear.

4 BY MR. GALLO:

5 Q. And the special subjects, what did those include in the  
6 ground training that you provided him?

7 A. Typically it covers lower than standard takeoff  
8 minimums.

9 Q. Is there anything --

10 A. But we touch on other stuff as well. I don't really  
11 recall that particular day.

12 Q. There was a flight in the Learjet to White Plains, New  
13 York. What was that flight, purpose of the flight?

14 A. To go to White Plains.

15 Q. Was that a training flight for Mr. Demos?

16 A. I put him in the right seat and let him fly on the way  
17 out there, I believe, and back.

18 Q. And what did you discuss with him during that flight?

19 A. Operations in general, operations of the Learjet.

20 Q. Were you planning on using him in the Learjet position?

21 A. Someday. A lot of our pilots are dual qualified.

22 Q. Was anybody else aboard the Learjet on that flight?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. And who were those people?

25 A. Oh, I believe Ron, and I think maybe Todd Beck.



1           Q.   And so was this a training flight, then, with everybody  
2   to go to White Plains, New York in the Learjet for Andy Demos; was  
3   that the purpose of the flight?

4           A.   The purpose was to drop off Ron and Todd to fly a Falcon  
5   home.

6           Q.   Okay, thank you. And on that flight, how much time did  
7   Mr. Demos -- how much time was he the flying pilot?

8           A.   I don't recall. I would have done the takeoff and  
9   landing.

10          Q.   Did Mr. Demos do any maneuvers en route?

11          A.   Maneuvers in what sense?

12          Q.   Could be steep turn, typical --

13          A.   No.

14          Q.   -- maneuvers that you would see in a --

15          A.   No, it was a normal en route flight.

16          Q.   Did Mr. Demos fly any approaches in the Learjet?

17          A.   You know, I don't recall at what point I would have  
18   taken over, but typically I won't let a new guy land a Learjet, so  
19   he may have flown the approach and then I took it on short final,  
20   or on final, you know. I don't recall.

21          Q.   And during that flight did he occupy the right seat for  
22   the entire flight, there and back?

23          A.   Yes.

24          Q.   So there was no switching seats with Tim or Ron?

25               COURT REPORTER: Is that a no? I'm sorry.

1 MR. KOSTICH: Oh, sorry.

2 BY MR. GALLO:

3 Q. Now, going to Mr. Demos's Part 135 check ride, can you  
4 discuss the flight portion of that check ride, what was done?

5 A. I didn't do the check ride.

6 Q. For the 135 check?

7 A. Correct.

8 Q. Does Royal Air use any outside training in any of their  
9 flight training or ground training? For example, like SimuFlite  
10 or FlightSafety?

11 A. No.

12 Q. Do you receive any outside training?

13 A. No.

14 Q. You mentioned that you had a good corporate culture.  
15 Can you describe what you do to have a good corporate culture and  
16 a safety culture?

17 A. Hard to describe all the details that go into that.  
18 Many facets.

19 MR. GALLO: All right, that's all the questions I have.  
20 I'll pass along to Ron Birnie [sic].

21 MR. GREENBLATT: I guess we have --

22 MR. GALLO: I'm sorry.

23 MR. GREENBLATT: -- oh, an hour and 20 minutes to go,  
24 then?

25 MR. GALLO: Barry, I'll pass to Barry Rogers. I'm

1     sorry. I got the wrong name.

2                 BY MR. ROGERS:

3             Q.    Okay, back to the training end of this. You said you  
4     taught some fuel systems. Was that a one-on-one or was that in a  
5     classroom? Where was that setting at?

6             A.    Classroom, one-on-one.

7             Q.    Okay, and the same thing with special subjects?

8             A.    Correct.

9             Q.    And about how many hours did you spend on those two  
10    subjects?

11            A.    Special subjects is about an hour, and all the fuel --  
12    and I'm just guessing -- we probably spent a couple hours. But  
13    that's a guess.

14            Q.    And that was done in one day or over 2 days or a series  
15    of days?

16            A.    Couple days.

17            Q.    Couple days?

18            A.    Yeah.

19            Q.    What do you know of Andy's previous experiences in  
20    aviation? Did he come to you guys with a multi-engine rating?

21            A.    Yes.

22            Q.    Did he have a lot of time, little time, what was his  
23    background?

24            A.    Well, he had flown in Alaska, I believe his resume said.  
25    He had flown, what, in Australia. He'd flown in the Chicago area.

1 But his resume said he had just under 2,000 hours total time.

2 Q. And you don't remember how much multi time he had?

3 A. I'd be guessing.

4 Q. Okay. Do you remember him having any turbine time, jet  
5 time?

6 A. Yes, there was some turbine time as well.

7 Q. Okay, and anything in a Lear prior to flying with you  
8 folks?

9 A. Any what?

10 Q. Any time in the Lear prior to your day with him?

11 A. I don't recall.

12 MR. ROGERS: That's all I can think of at the moment.

13 Anything you have, Burt?

14 MR. ANGLE: Bart.

15 MR. ROGERS: Bart.

16 MR. ANGLE: I don't have any questions.

17 MR. ROGERS: Okay.

18 BY MR. ROGERS:

19 Q. Other than in the Lear, did you fly with him in a 310?

20 A. On two occasions, two training flights.

21 Q. Can you describe what the training flight consisted of?

22 A. Departure from Pontiac, we usually go to Flint and shoot  
23 multiple approaches, emergency procedures such as engine failures  
24 and maneuvers, then return to Pontiac with usually another  
25 approach. I don't recall the exact sequence either one of those

1 days, but I know we shot a lot of approaches.

2 Q. Now, the single engine work, was that all in the air?  
3 Was there any on the ground? Can you expand upon that at all?

4 A. Most of it's in the air. I forget if we did a rejected  
5 takeoff or not as far as ground failures, but most of it's in the  
6 air.

7 Q. Okay, and the maneuver section you made mention of?

8 A. Well, that would be slow flight, steep turns, stall,  
9 recovery.

10 Q. Okay. Now you said you did numerous approaches. Were  
11 they all ILSes or --

12 A. No, a variety. You know, non-precision, precision, and  
13 circling as well.

14 Q. And was this under simulated instrument conditions or  
15 any actual with him?

16 A. You know, that day part of it was actual because of the  
17 cloud cover on the way over, I believe, you know, above 4- -- or  
18 above 3,000 feet. But for the actual approaches being vectored at  
19 3-, it was below the cloud deck.

20 Q. So was it simulated or --

21 A. Simulated, other than the en route, which was actual.

22 Q. Okay, and how do you do your simulated instrument  
23 approaches? Can you walk me through what it typically looks like,  
24 or --

25 A. What? The instrument approach?

1           Q.   Well, was it a hood, was it some sort of obscuration in  
2 the windscreen. How did you, how did you do the simulated  
3 approach?

4           A.   Typically, you know, a baseball cap aimed down.

5           Q.   And how did he perform on those?

6           A.   Very good. I had no issues.

7           Q.   Did you need to coach him at all?

8           A.   No. It was like we had already trained him and he was  
9 just doing a recurrent ride. He was, he was good. I was  
10 impressed.

11          Q.   Well, if that was to have happened today, would there  
12 have been a debrief of anything and can you remember any  
13 shortcomings in a debrief session that you might have had with  
14 him? Tendencies, things to look for?

15          A.   You know, the one thing I recall, the first ILS on the  
16 first day, he went to a full flap configuration prior to DH,  
17 which, you know, I corrected him on and told him that we don't  
18 ever go full flaps till landing is assured, and he got that and  
19 from that point it was not -- never an issue.

20          Q.   Then what was a standard approach configuration for the  
21 company? I don't know that much about --

22          A.   A Cessna 310 is approach flaps from the marker inbound,  
23 and either go missed or find the runway and go full flaps and  
24 land.

25          Q.   Typical airspeed, typical power setting?

1           A.    Seventeen to -- well, downhill, it depends whether it's  
2   warm or cold, but 16 inches of manifold pressure and, you know,  
3   about 120. I think blue line is 107, so anywhere from 110 to 120  
4   is good, but 120 is kind of what we normally hit.

5           Q.    In a case of missed approach or go-around, what do you  
6   have to do, anything special with the airplane?

7           A.    Just climb power and positive rate, gear up, and once  
8   you're accelerating, flaps up.

9           Q.    Did he execute all those pretty well?

10          A.    What's that? Oh, yeah.

11          Q.    He executed those well?

12                COURT REPORTER: Was that a yes? I'm sorry, you have to  
13   say yes.

14                MR. KOSTICH: Yeah.

15                COURT REPORTER: Okay.

16                MR. KOSTICH: Yes.

17                MR. ROGERS: Gentlemen? Go ahead.

18                BY MR. ANGLE:

19          Q.    On the training flights that you did with Mr. Demos, did  
20   you encounter any airframe icing --

21          A.    No.

22          Q.    -- during those flights?

23          A.    No.

24          Q.    Does Royal Air, in its course of training, cover how a  
25   pilot would react to encountering airframe icing?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Okay. And was -- do you recall if the accident aircraft  
3 was equipped for icing conditions?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Okay. And he -- and Mr. Demos would have been trained  
6 on the operation of the anti-icing equipment?

7 A. Correct.

8 MR. ANGLE: Okay, that's all I have.

9 BY MR. ROGERS:

10 Q. Can you elaborate on that a little more, what de-icing  
11 equipment do you have on a 310?

12 A. Well, that particular one, I believe, was known ice, so  
13 it would be wings, tail, windshield, props.

14 Q. Is that hot wings, or --

15 A. Inflatable boots, hot props.

16 Q. And in your typical training for flown -- flying in  
17 known icing conditions, what does that entail, roughly?

18 A. Basically it all taught, you know, you don't stay in any  
19 ice; you change altitude and get out of it, whether it's a known  
20 ice aircraft or not. Ice is ice, and you bug out. You don't, you  
21 know, you don't stay there. And depending upon temperatures you  
22 make a decision to go up or down to get yourself out of the ice.

23 Q. Well, with Andy being a new employee, is there any  
24 restrictions on him as far as weather and conditions that he's  
25 flying in? Do you guys control that?



1           A.    Ron handles that, and apparently he had put  
2 restrictions.  He does that on all the new guys just while they  
3 get more time in the plane.

4           Q.    And what typically would that be?

5           A.    You know, you'd have to ask Ron.  He assigns different  
6 to different people, depending upon their past experience.

7                   BY MR. GALLO:

8           Q.    I have some additional questions.  Since we're talking  
9 about the Cessna 310, what are typical power settings that you  
10 would use and also what you would train for, for cruise flight?

11          A.    Cruise is 23 squared.

12          Q.    And what air speed would you get on that?

13          A.    Well, your typical no wing groundspeed's 180 knots.  
14 Airspeed's going to depend on altitude, as far as indicated.

15          Q.    And in dividing up the training between yourself and Ron  
16 with Mr. Andy Demos, how was that decision making made, who does  
17 what with Andy and when it's done?

18          A.    It's just -- no set procedures for that.  We just both  
19 evaluate the person, as a double check.

20          Q.    Is it also based on your availability?

21          A.    Well, from day to day it might be.

22          Q.    Have you had any other Part 135 instructors in the  
23 company other than yourself and Ron?

24          A.    Not for the last several years.

25          Q.    Do you recall how much time Mr. Andy Demos would spend

1 at Royal Air during his training?

2 A. No.

3 Q. During his training in December, did you see him at  
4 Royal Air?

5 A. Oh, sure.

6 Q. Do you remember what time he would come in to --

7 A. Not really. It seems like he was there in the morning,  
8 but I can't remember.

9 Q. And how is the -- well, let me go back.

10 Are you also a 135 check airman for the 310?

11 A. No.

12 Q. So how was it determined that Mr. Demos was ready for  
13 his Part 135 check ride?

14 A. Through accomplishing all the training segments in the  
15 training program successfully, and basically, beyond that, making  
16 Ron and myself happy with his performance.

17 Q. Were you performing any other ground or flight training  
18 during the month of December?

19 A. Oh, I'm sure. It pretty much happens all the time.

20 Q. And do you also fly freight flights?

21 A. Occasionally.

22 Q. And how is that determined or why is it determined that  
23 you would fly a freight flight when you have pilots in your  
24 organization to do those flights?

25 A. Oh, a number of ways. Either they're short on pilots or

1 sometimes if it's a short trip and they want to save pilots for  
2 better trips, they'll use me if I'm available.

3 MR. GALLO: All right, that's all the questions I have.

4 MR. ROGERS: I can't think of anything at the moment.

5 MR. GALLO: Well, that's all we have then. Thank you.

6 MR. KOSTICH: Thank you.

7 Can I ask one?

8 MR. GALLO: Sure.

9 MR. KOSTICH: Any word from Continental? Continental,  
10 the engine, has it been run?

11 MR. ANGLE: Not yet.

12 MR. GALLO: Do you have anything else you'd like to  
13 share with us that we may have forgotten to ask?

14 MR. KOSTICH: No, I guess not.

15 MR. GALLO: Okay, all right, we're all done. Thanks.

16 (Whereupon, at 8:41 a.m., the interview was concluded.)  
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:           JANUARY 10, 2014  
                                  CESSNA 310R, N3829G,  
                                  ROYAL AIR FLIGHT 907  
                                  PONTIAC, MICHIGAN  
                                  Interview of Kirt Kostich

DOCKET NUMBER:            CEN14FA110

PLACE:                      Waterford, Michigan

DATE:                       March 12, 2014

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,  
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been compared to  
the recording accomplished at the interview.

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Kristen Shankleton  
Transcriber