



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Joshua D. Cawthra
Senior Aviation Accident Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Date: 7/25/2018
Person Contacted: Dave Bonorden (CAF Unit Operations Officer)
NTSB Accident Number: WPR18FA201

Narrative:

During an in-person interview, Mr. Bonorden stated his duties are responsible for their air crews being trained, proficient, and current, and scheduling them for flights, and making sure they are compliant with CAF rules and FAA regulations, in addition to recruiting, bringing new people in and getting them through the process. Mr. Bonorden stated he organizes and runs the "FEB's", a CAF process for bringing in new pilots. Mr. Bonorden that Greg approached the unit to fly the DC3, and that he knew Greg through another aviation organization for a few years, but not well, but knew he was a CFI and DPE and that he had a Cessna 310. Mr. Bonorden said that Gregs been a member of the unit on an off throughout the years, helped a bit with air shows, and about 6 months prior to the accident, Greg approached him to ask what it would take for him to get his DC3 type rating and if he could get it through the unit. Mr. Bonorden said that he later walked Greg through the process for him getting his type rating, and would have to sponsor the airplane, and went it for \$1,200/hour.

Mr. Bonorden thought Greg may have spoken to Mark about it at some point as well and also mentioned to him getting a DC3 type was on his bucket list. He added that Greg disappeared for a while and then a few months prior, told him that he got his type rating. Mr. Bonorden told him that he would have to be second in command for a while, at least 25 hours or more and that Greg started inquiring when could he go fly when the airplane was down for maintenance in San Antonio. Mr. Bonorden stated that Greg told him that he needed a few more hours to get a DPE authorization for a DC3 and recalled that it may be good to have a DPE on staff for the DC3 in the CAF. Mr. Bonorden said that until that point, Greg wasn't on the priority list, as their worries were for Oshkosh and getting plans together. He said that when this topic came up about the DPE, Mark and him decided it might be a good thing and things seemed to be going a lot better. Mr. Bonorden said that Randy and Rick flew the airplane back up from San Antonio following engine repairs/work (right engine replaced, new left engine carb). Simon had time to fly with Greg, so he told him lets proceed and see how Greg does. Mr. Bonorden said that he told Simon that he would like to have Greg ready to fly to Oshkosh but doesn't think he put any pressure on Ssimon to get it done. The goal was to get Greg time up to Oshkosh and back from Oshkosh

to get him some time and wasn't going to let him fly rides or in the airshow. Mr. Bonorden stated that his thinking at the time was that Greg had more recent DC3 time than anyone, just passing a type rating, and that he flew with Simon. He added that the end goal was to get Greg more flight time in the airplane.

Mr. Bonorden stated that they didn't consider that all of Greg's time in the DC3 was in a light airplane condition and in the left seat, and that the time when Greg flew with Simon in the right seat, still in a light weight DC3. Mr. Bonorden said that following Greg's flights with Simon, he never talked to Simon about Greg's performance.

When asked about the weight and balance of the airplane, Mr. Bonorden said that Mark did the weight and balance, and that they previously weighed all of the items carried on the airplane on a regular basis, however, did not actually weigh the bags or personal items that were loaded onto the airplane the day of the accident. Mr. Bonorden stated that he recalled Mark and Stephen brought camping along with him and that they were playing with the W&B spread sheet, estimating luggage was 50-55 pounds per person. They initially were thinking that they might be over gross weight and might need to take on less fuel initially, however, Mr. Bonorden saw Mark, Greg and Randy talking about the weight and balance, and they told him to top the airplane off. Mr. Bonorden recalled the ramp weight was 25,200 pounds, and they were about 100-200 lbs lighter, and the max gross weight for the airplane was 25,200, however, the model of airplane usually operates 25,600-25,900, and the unit artificially limited the airplane to a 6,000 lb payload, which was a maximum of 25,200 lbs. Mr. Bonorden said that Mark told him the CG was right in the middle of the envelope.

Mr. Bonorden said he wasn't included in any of the flight crew briefs but was present for the crew chief brief with the passengers, noting that Stephen did a good job, and it was the same brief that he does with passengers, specifically covered doors, exits, and about the axe and fire extinguisher locations. Mr. Bonorden recalled it was really extensive.

Mr. Bonorden further stated the taxi out seemed normal, run up was smooth as ever that he recalled, and he told his wife that the airplane was running as good as it ever run, nothing unusual. Mr. Bonorden said that he remembers taxiing onto the runway, and rolling forward a bit before power came up, he was talking to his wife, but not paying much attention. The takeoff roll, started normal, didn't recall feeling the tail lift, had a few swerves early in the takeoff roll, noticeable shifts, a good bit after brake release, with some acceleration, remembered thinking "the swerves kinda sucked" with the takeoff. Mr. Bonorden further stated that following the initial swerves, "it went downhill quickly" and with some big swerves, and thought one of the mains departed the runway, wondered why they weren't shutting down, then he felt the airplane become airborne and thought we'll be ok, which he said lasted a second, until it [the airplane] banked to the right, didn't think the wind was gusty and was down the runway at 8 knots or so, was seated the aft side of the left wing, saw it impact the ground and the tip crumple up, shortly after, hit the ground, sliding sideways, got nervous about if they were going to hit something. Mr. Bonorden said that when the airplane came to a stop, he heard Chris get out get out hurry hurry, and then they started getting out of the airplane. Mr. Bonorden said that he recalled after the airplane stopped, saw fuel spreading all over the fuselage and also underneath. Recalled Juan and Mark opened the door, fuel was burning outside the door, Mark and Juan exited and collided during the exit, Caleb went out, Tina went out, and then Dave went out. Chris' Wife and daughter exited, then Chris D., then Chris Williams, followed by Greg, Steve, then Randy.

Mr. Bonorden stated that Randy was absolutely 90-day current and that he obtained it on the flight back up from San Antonio to Burnet, consisting of 3 full stop landings, along with flying That's All Brother (another DC3) in June. Mr. Bonorden said that he had no concern about Greg flying the airplane other than him possibly mis managing the engines on a low power descent.

When asked about the lack of a written test for the DC3 in Greg's file, Mr. Bonorden said Greg's lack of ground training (written test), was an oversight, and that he never got with Simon about making sure Simon covered the ground portion of the checkout.

Mr. Bonorden further reported that Mark and Juan were not assuming crew duties for the flight and that Mark and Juan had their flight suits but weren't wearing them. He added that he wasn't sure why Steve or Randy didn't have their flight suits on.

Mr. Bonorden reported that the purpose of the flight was to go to Oshkosh for the week and return on Sunday, the 29th. The route of flight included one intermediate fuel stop, based upon weather conditions along the route of flight.

Mr. Bonorden recalled fire department there within 2 minutes after the accident.



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

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Date: 11/13/2018
Person Contacted: Dave Bonorden (CAF Unit Operations Officer)
NTSB Accident Number: WPR18FA201

Narrative:

During a telephone conversation, Mr. Bonorden recalled that a week or so prior to the accident, Randy told him that he "tweaked his knee." Mr. Bonorden quired Randy a few days before the flight, and he said he was fine. Mr. Bonorden added that Randy had flown the Cessna 180 as well earlier in the week and thought it wasn't an issue. In addition, Mr. Bonorden recalled the brace Randy was wearing was an elastic / stretch type, not a mechanical one.