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Contract Land, Lease and Title Service  
Oil, Gas and Coal Properties

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Tom Ritter, President

Mr. Michael Folkerts  
National Transportation Safety Board, Central Region  
[REDACTED]

February 13, 2023

RE: N425Z Accident February 6, 2023, at KBIS

Mr. Folkerts:

You have requested I write a summary of my recollections of the captioned as witnessed from the right seat which I generally occupy to try and learn as much as I can about operating the Conquest, although I have never flown or operated the controls of this plane.

To begin with, Robert has always been an exemplary pilot for me and my family. I have known him and utilized his services as a pilot, instructor and more recently A & P for probably 7-8 years and possibly longer. He has always been conscientious and diligent when in the cockpit and I have trusted him and his piloting skills completely. I am just trying to understand how something like this could happen and if there is something further that might have been done to prevent the outcome we had.

Monday the 6<sup>th</sup> of February seemed to be a bit different right from the start, and I don't know if these little issues had anything to do with the rest of the day's events.

Preparing to depart KCHD on taxi to 22R the brakes were working fine, as evidenced when Robert aggressively braked the plane while taxiing and held it with brakes while plane was still in taxi settings, to stop and take down his IFR clearance. Usually, he would respond with "Stand by", then stop and secure the plane and then contact tower to take down the information. Not a big deal, but he also had an error on his readback which was corrected, and we proceeded with the flight. Both out of character for him and I have mentioned this to Robert as we discussed the events of that day.

We departed KCHD about 10:50 MST. On climb out, tower instructed a left turn to 030 and Robert responded but commenced a right turn. I quickly noticed this and commented that we were instructed a left turn, which he quickly corrected, and we proceeded with left turn. The flight to KBIS was pretty much uneventful.

Upon arrival at KBIS, we were vectored for a visual approach to 31 as the wind was gusting to 28-30 kts from about 320. Robert had placed a GoPro camera on his windscreen to record the approach and landing. I believe it let go and fell, and he handed it to me to continue the recording by holding it on top of the glareshield in front of me while we landed.

We had a good landing and as we were taxiing in and nearing the FBO, my phone indicated a call from the person there to pick me up. I needed two hands to handle the call and Robert reached over and took the camera off the glareshield and set it down. I did not see him turn it off so the camera may have recorded our voices and what transpired during the upcoming mishap. I completed my call and sat watching the approach to the FBO.

We slowly approached the front of the FBO and as the lineman who marshalled us in indicated we stop, the plane came to a stop. Almost immediately I noticed an increase in the pitch or noise from the engines and the plane seemed to lurch forward, first to the right and then to the left a bit. I recall seeing the lineman jump and run as the plane came forward a him. The plane just seemed to meander straight towards a hangar that appeared to be 50 to 75 meters ahead of us. I believe I shouted out to Robert, what's going on and turn the plane, but here was no change and inevitably, we impacted the corner of the hangar with our left wing. The plane pivoted around the contact point into the other side of the hangar and into snowbank, where the left propellor then came in contact with a tug or something and the right propellor came into contact with a large ground auxiliary power unit.

As we were heading for the hangar, Robert may have said the brakes don't work or something to that effect. I don't recall him doing much, if anything on the center console with the throttle, fuel and pitch controls. I may have been distracted and not seen all that was going on, but the engines continued to run as they were, and we impacted the hangar with a fair amount of force. After the impact, it was quite confusing in the cockpit, and it seems like we sat there quite a while trying to assess just what had just happened. There was a loud noise like a fan that continued for some time as we sat there. I asked Robert what that was, and he responded that he did not know. I looked over at him and he was turned to his left and seemed to be vigorously working on something on the left side of the cockpit. At this point, I got up to go back and check on my wife and as I entered the back cabin, I observed it was filling up with what appeared to be smoke. With that, I thought it best we get out of the plane to be safe. I opened the airstair door and it was then that I discovered the noise was the left engine still running even though the prop was not turning. The smoke was the exhaust going into the cabin. As it was quite noisy, I shouted at Robert to shut down the engines, as that was the source of the noise we were hearing. I was fearful that a fire could ensue if there was any fuel leak. I believe he then shut down the engines as the noise quit. There were emergency personnel standing there as I climbed down, and they then assisted my wife in exiting the plane. They asked us to stay clear of the plane, so we then walked back over to the FBO.

I don't have a great understanding of multiengine and turboprop aircraft control, but I would think there are other ways to turn or stop an aircraft even with a possible brake failure. I don't recall seeing or hearing anything from Robert about efforts in that direction.


I had a cut or gouge on my right hand that was bleeding quite a bit and a woman at the FBO, I believe her name might be Linda, got a first aid kit and cleaned up the cut and put a large band aid on it. My wife sustained some pulled muscles and bruised rib, as she had only a lap belt on during the impact and was twisted fairly violently at impact. These are minor injuries, and we are both healing and will be fine.

After some time, I walked back towards plane and took a couple of photos with my phone. Robert eventually got our luggage out of the nose compartment and cabin of the plane and we left with our friends who had come to the airport to pick us up. He said he would stay with the plane until secure. Duane DeMars, Williston, ND was at KBIS to pick us up and watched the plane taxi in and witnessed the accident from the Executive FBO.

The airport fire department and emergency services were at the scene before we were even out of the aircraft and seemed to be very professional and helpful in assessing and getting the situation under control in a prompt and safe manner.

Although it is a blessing that no one was hurt, the emotional impact of all of this is just now starting to set in. I am most interested to understand what might have caused this accident and if there is something more that might have been done to prevent avert it.

To the best of my recollection, this is a true and correct account of my observations of the events leading up to the accident of N425Z on February 6, 2023.



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