



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Office of Aviation Safety
Washington, D.C. 20594

January 5, 2017

Attachment 7 – Eyewitness Statements

OPERATIONAL/ HUMAN FACTORS

DCA17IA020

Interviewee: Marven Alphonse
Date: November 3, 2016
Time of Phone Interview: 1604 EDT

Persons on Telephone Call: Mr. Marven Alphonse and Shawn Etcher (Ops Group Chairman)

During the telephone conversation Mr. Alphonse stated the following:

He stated that he attends Vaughn College and that at the time of the event he was on a break from a tutoring session. His teacher had provided him a 10-minute break and he and a friend had gone to the "tower," located on the building that he was in. He further stated that the tower overlooks the freeway and beyond that runway 4/22 at LaGuardia, which he could see the night of the event.

He stated that he noticed that the airplane was moving "fast" and then witnessed the airplane go into the "blast pad." He further reported hearing, as the airplane went into the "blast pad," as sound similar to a "clap."

He further stated that he had not seen the airplane land; however, did notice that it was "moving fast" when compared to the other airplane he observed just prior to this airplane. He said that as he continued to watch the airplane he did not see any thrust reversers being deployed nor did he see any ground spoilers on the wing; however, he clarified that he only could observe the left side of the airplane, as viewed if he was watching it from behind, and that it was raining. He further stated that the previous airplane exited the runway about halfway down the runway, and that at that same area the incident airplane was "moving fast."

When asked what he would expect to see when the thrust reversers were used he stated that after the incident he went on-line to see what Boeing 737 thrust reversers looked like when deployed. He stated that the pictures looked like "something sticking out of it." When asked to clarify where he would look for that he stated on the sides of the engines, and that he did not observe anything "sticking out." He further stated that he also went on-line to see what the spoilers would look like on the airplane and stated that he did not see anything "sticking up on the wing" during the landing roll.

When asked to describe what the intensity of the rain was, he stated that if rain could be measured between "light, medium and heavy" he would say it was "medium" intensity rain.

When asked to describe if he observed water on the runway around the airplane, he stated that he did observe water and that it "just splashed a bit."

The telephone interview concluded at 1619 EDT.

The following is an email statement Mr. Alphonse submitted to the NTSB eyewitness email address:

From: Marven Alphonse
Sent: Friday, October 28, 2016 3:55:31 AM (UTC+00:00) Monrovia, Reykjavik
To: Witness
Subject: Mike Pence's campaign plane !!

Hello my name is Marven Alphonse and I go to Vaughn College of Aeronautics and -technology. I had a night class (tutoring) at 6 and ends at 9, in-between that time my professor allowed and gave us a 10 min brake, and my friend persuaded me to go to the tower at Vaughn... (were students)

When we made it there we saw or I saw a plane landing on runway 4-22. The plane slowed down (WELL) got off the runway and began to taxi its way to the airport.

Moving on...

My friend and I were talking about when we should go back ... we had some time left and continued to enjoy the view, when my friend says almost out loud and with concern "that plane is moving fast" i quickly saw and commented...

I saw the plane almost halfway than halfway on runway 4 22

And in shock I watched the plane going faster and faster... it seems as if there was no Reverse thrusters on (in fact I don't believe I saw them as I looked on the engine .. left engine)

(In SHOCK and DISBELIF AND WHAT I SAW NEXT, I thought the plane was going to somehow slow down rapidly, stop at the end of the runway and taxi towards its gate)

And I was in shock (still in shock) that the plane went off the runway and went over the blast pad and all you heard was a big clap as if someone hit their hands together.

I told my friend take a video or a picture still it shock and yelling we came to a decision to go tell our professor... ironically we were going over (review) WHAT A BLAST PAD IS AND WHAT HAPPANS IN SITUTATIONS SUCH AS THIS.

My phone Number is XXX-XXX-XXXX

My friend will also be making a report on what he saw sometime tomorrow

Police Officer Brian Cooney – Port Authority of NY & NJ

The following is a written statement provided to the NTSB from Officer Cooney:

Statement of Police Officer Brian Cooney of the Port Authority of NY & NJ Police re: N278EA aircraft incident on 10/27/16.

At about 1900 hrs, I escorted a motorcade of 10-12 vehicles onto the AOA at LGA in anticipation of the arrival of an aircraft with a VIP passenger on board (Indiana Governor Mike Pence, the 2016 Republican nominee for Vice President).

Upon arrival on the tarmac, I positioned my vehicle in such a way as to have a view of aircraft arriving on Runway 22. The rear of my Police vehicle was against the perimeter fence, roughly 1000 feet from Runway 22, near Taxiway D. I sat in the car for the next 45 minutes or so with a Secret Service agent seated next to me, and I monitored the LGA Tower frequency 118.70, so I would know when the aircraft was in range.

At about 1940-1945hrs, I heard the aircraft (Eastern, with a flight number I don't recall), make radio contact with the Tower and receive clearance to land, and then I watched the plane come into view soon after it touched down on Runway 22. I recognized the aircraft right away, as it has a distinctive livery for the 2016 US presidential campaign, and I have handled VIP escorts with that aircraft on several prior occasions. As it came into my line of sight, moving from my left to my right, the aircraft appeared to be moving much faster than other aircraft typically travel when in that general area of the airfield. Seconds later I heard radio transmissions wherein the ATCT controller yelled, "Stop! Eastern! Stop!"

I immediately drove toward the end of the Runway, and within seconds observed that the aircraft had come to a stop on the grass, to the right of the arrestor bed. I radioed for police and ARFF equipment, and made contact with the flight crew via an open window in the cockpit on the port side of the plane.

The landing gear wheels were several inches deep in mud, as it was raining heavily at the time of the incident, and had been raining continuously throughout the afternoon and early evening. Numerous police, ARFF, Port Authority and US Secret Service personnel responded to the scene, and safely evacuated the plane without further incident.

Statement submitted 1540hrs 10/28/16 at Building 137, LGA Airport, New York

Police Officer Brian Cooney