

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD		Time	Date
RECORD OF: <input type="checkbox"/> VISIT <input type="checkbox"/> CONFERENCE OR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TELEPHONE CALL		1430	4/20/06
Name (s) of Person (s) contacted or in conference and location		Routing	
		Symbol	Initials
Bruce Ellingwood			
Hawaii			
Subject L-39MS accident			
Page 1 of 3			
<p>Digest</p> <p>During a telephone conversation with Mr. Ellingwood, he provided additional information about the events leading up to the accident date, and he confirmed that he previously provided a telephone interview with Special Agent Stefanie Vetter, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, on 1/27/06. The following is a synopsis of the two interviews.</p> <p>Mr. Ellingwood said that he was the pilot of the second L-39 airplane (N106XX) that flew from Palmer, Alaska, to Sitka, Alaska, on 1/23/06. He said he is a pilot for Aloha Airlines, is retired from the Hawaii Air National Guard, and has flown jet fighters for 28 years. He also flies under contract for Air USA, and has done so since October, 2004. Mr. Ellingwood met the pilot of the accident airplane, Stephen Freeman, in December, 2005, in San Diego, California, when he went to train in an Alpha Jet that Air USA was operating on a Navy contract. The instructor was Mr. Freeman.</p> <p>On 1/22/06, Mr. Ellingwood arrived in Wasilla, Alaska, to fly one of the L-39MS airplanes to Ketchikan, Alaska, and then on to Arlington, Washington, as Air USA was repossessing four jets for failure to pay full price. He met with Mr. Freeman on the morning of 1/23/06 for a briefing about their flight from Palmer. Mr. Freeman was well prepared, having brought a laptop computer, maps, publications, IFR charts, approach plates, and a hand-drawn page of diversion airports with airport diagrams and radio frequencies. They decided that Bellingham, Washington, would be their choice of landing, after Ketchikan, Alaska.</p> <p>The two men drove to the Palmer Airport, obtained a weather briefing at the flight service station, and went to the hangar where the airplanes were parked. Their were told that the airplanes had been issued a ferry permit for the flight. At the hangar, the group from Air USA were approached by representatives of Security Aviation, and a confrontation ensued about the repossessing of the airplanes.</p>			
Conclusions, Action Taken, or Required			
Date 4/20/06	Title Air Safety Investigator	Signature <i>Scott Erickson</i>	

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Bruce Ellingwood			
Hawaii			
Subject L-39MS accident			
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<p>Digest</p> <p>A Security Aviation representative became belligerent and agitated, and Mr. Freeman then identified himself as a U.S. Customs law enforcement officer to calm the situation. He did not present his badge or credentials. The owner of the hangar arrived, and asked Security Aviation persons to leave the building. Mr. Ellingwood and Mr. Freeman moved their airplanes out of the hangar and prepared for departure.</p> <p>As the two airplanes were about to taxi to the runway, Palmer Police Department persons arrived and ordered them to shut down and return to the hangar, which was accomplished. The owner of Air USA and Mr. Freeman conferred with the police officers, and a short time later, he was told that everything had checked out. Because of the delay, the two airplanes departed about 1515, and diverted to Sitka due to weather conditions in Ketchikan, landing about 2 hours later. During the flight to Sitka, Mr. Ellington said that his airplane's Czech-made attitude gyro was inoperative because of his error during the restart in Palmer. He did not provide enough time for it to stabilize and align properly. He shut the gyro off and utilized the primary flight instrument function on his airplane's multifunction display.</p> <p>When the two airplanes arrived in Sitka, they were met by Sitka Police Department persons. They were told that their airplanes had been reported as stolen by Security Aviation. The situation was explained and resolved in a few minutes. The airplanes were placed in the Coast Guard hangar for the night. During the evening, Mr. Ellingwood said that Mr. Freeman was in an upbeat mood, and neither of them voiced concern about the airplanes. He was unaware of any stress issues in Mr. Freeman's life. The following morning, 1/24/06, Mr. Ellingwood said that they checked the weather forecast about 0730. Because Mr. Ellingwood was scheduled to fly the next day on a contract flight with Air USA in Hawaii, he decided to return home via a commercial flight. That was the last time he spoke with Mr. Freeman.</p>			
Conclusions, Action Taken, or Required			
Date 4/20/06	Title Air Safety Investigator	Signature <i>Scott Erickson</i>	

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Bruce Ellingwood

Hawaii

Subject L-39MS accident

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Digest

When asked about the airworthiness of the airplanes, Mr. Ellingwood stated that they were airworthy. They had been checked by a mechanic who put the airplanes together earlier in the week. Because the airplanes were going to be flown in Alaska weather, two particular parts of the airplane were checked carefully. These were the pilot heat, and engine anti-ice system. Mr. Ellingwood said the neither he or Mr. Freeman had any problems with airplanes. He described Mr. Freeman as having flown the L-39 longer than he did, and said that Freeman was one of the best pilot he has known.

Conclusions, Action Taken, or Required

Date 4/20/06

Title Air Safety Investigator

Signature *Scott Erickson*

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD		Time	Date
RECORD OF: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> VISIT <input type="checkbox"/> CONFERENCE OR <input type="checkbox"/> TELEPHONE CALL		1400	1/27/06
Name(s) of Person(s) contacted or in conference and location		Routing	
		Symbol	Initials
Bob Grace			
Pro Mech Hangar, Ketchikan			
Subject L-39 crash			
<p>Digest</p> <p>During a visit to the Pro Mech hangar, located at Peninsula Point, Mr. Grace reported that he was working outside on the ramp area behind the hangar, between the hangar and the Tongass Narrows. He said he was moving a float plane via a modified truck, and just before 1300, noticed a military fighter jet descending at a high rate of speed, nose and wings level, with the landing gear down. Mr. Grace said the airplane was moving fast, and descending fast on about a 20 to 25 degree angle toward the water from about 200 feet. It had just passed over a Marine Highway ferry vessel and as he watched, it flew into the water about 100 yards from the shore at Peninsula Point. He did not notice the presence of wing drop tanks, and did not notice the position of the flaps or speed brakes. The airplane collided with the water, which produced a large splash and enveloped the airplane. It skipped into the air about 10 feet, and hit the water again, producing another large splash. The airplane again skipped into the air about 10 feet and hit the water a third time, with just the landing gear hitting the water. Mr. Grace said he thought there was some type of sheen on the water where the airplane skipped. Because he was inside the cab of the truck, he said he did not hear any engine noise. He did not see any flames or smoke from the airplane. After the airplane hit the water the third time, it began to climb away and bank to the right, and Mr. Grace lost sight of the jet. He said the wind was blowing hard enough to cancel a test flight of a de Havilland DHC-3. He estimated the wind as from the northwest, about 30 knots, with blowing snow and a visibility of about 3/4 mile. Three feet-high waves were present on the water. He said he could see the outline of the blue-colored hull of the Columbia, but could not see the white-colored superstructure. Mr. Grace stated that he is a pilot.</p>			
Conclusions, Action Taken, or Required			
Date 1/27/06	Title Air Safety Investigator	Signature <i>Scott Erickson</i>	

Erickson Scott

From: Bob Grace [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, February 10, 2006 11:40 AM
To: Erickson Scott
Cc: Donald.LeClair [REDACTED]
Subject: Ketchikan L39 accident

Scott Erickson, NTSB

I talked to Don LeClair and you at the Promech Air hanger at Peninsula Point about this accident. I am an aircraft mechanic, I work for Promech air. I have worked primarily at Peninsula Point for 21 years (since February, 1985) for three different companies that have maintained fixed wing aircraft from that facility. I have also worked on aircraft at the Ketchikan airport from time to time. I have watched many floatplanes land, take-off and fly by, very close to the hanger. I have not worked much with aircraft that fly and land fast so I cannot guess at the aircrafts actual speed, but it was flying faster than anything I have ever been that close to.

On Jan 25, 2006 I saw a small, green camouflage, jet fighter looking aircraft approaching downwind from the northwest, coming in level, it was moving fast and descending fast. It had just passed over a ferry approaching from the same direction. The aircraft had its landing gear down, I did not see it rocking side to side or pitching the nose up or down, I did not notice any flaps or air brakes. The jet flew right into the water, it did not flair, or slow its descent, it just hit the water bounced hit again bounced and hit a third time but not nearly as hard and climbed skyward out of my vision towards the right. The splash from the aircraft hitting the water completely covered the aircraft from my vision on the first and second hit the third time the aircraft hit the water it was not nearly as hard, just the landing gear hit the water and the plane started to climb back into the sky. I was inside a "Gator" (aircraft ground-spotting vehicle) moving a running aircraft, so I did not hear any engine noise from the jet. I did not see any flames or smoke either. When the jet climbed, the wing of the aircraft I was moving was between me and the jet, so I lost sight of it as soon as it started to climb. The jet hit the water 100-200 yards from shore, the first hit was directly behind the Promech Air's blue hanger. It hit the water three times in about 200 yards' distance heading towards town (southeast). After the aircraft climbed and I lost sight of it I noticed that the water surface where the aircraft hit had a odd, shiny or glossy look to it for a while, like there was a fuel spill.

The weather was blowing hard enough that we canceled our test flight of an aircraft and the Otter that was being pulled out of the water was having a real hard time turning around for the downwind water-taxi approach to the trailer. I would estimate the wind to be northwesterly at 30+ knots. It was also snowing, to the northwest I could make out the outline of the Islands on each side of the ferry, I could see the blue hull of the ferry but I could not make out the white superstructure through the snow. I could see the shore across the channel and to the southeast I could see the lights at the northwest end of the airport but I could not make out any of the airport features. There was about ¼ mile visibility.

Sincerely

Robert D. Grace

2/10/2006

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD		Time	Date
RECORD OF: <input type="checkbox"/> VISIT <input type="checkbox"/> CONFERENCE OR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TELEPHONE CALL		1210	5/5/06
Name(s) of Person(s) contacted or in conference and location		Routing	
		Symbol	Initials
Lauralee Samalot			
Ketchikan, AK			
Subject L-39MS accident			
<p>Digest</p> <p>During a telephone conversation with Ms. Samalot, she provided additional information about her observations of the accident, and confirmed that she previously provided an interview with Special Agent Stefanie Vetter, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, along with Special Agent Eric Schwalber, FBI, on 1/26/06. The following is a synopsis of the two interviews.</p> <p>At 1250, Ms. Samalot exited the back door of the A & P Grocery Store building, which placed her in the parking lot, north of the building. She said she heard an airplane engine sound that, "did not sound right." The engine was making a sputtering sound, similar to the sound of a car engine that "is missing the timing when attempting to start." Ms. Samalot said that she had been a military wife and recognized the sound of an airplane engine, and recognized that this one did not sound right. She then heard a loud "bang", and looked up toward the west. From her point of view in the parking lot, over the top of a taller building than the one she just exited, she said she saw what looked like an airplane canopy, and just in front of the canopy, she saw a small parachute. She described the parachute as not full, and thought to herself, "this is not good." From her angle of view, Ms. Samalot said it appeared that the parachute was going to land on the roof of the building next to the A & P, and it appeared to be about 10 feet above the building. She could not see the seat of the airplane.</p> <p>Ms. Samalot then saw the airplane come to rest in the parking lot. This was just after it struck a trailer, which she said appeared to have been cut in half. She saw a women, a child, and young man running from the area of the trailer. The airplane was on-fire, as well as the trailer. She called 911, and stated that the whole incident happened in less than 1 minute. Ms. Samalot said that the visibility was very low, and it was snowing very hard.</p>			
Conclusions, Action Taken, or Required			
Date 5/5/06	Title Air Safety Investigator	Signature <i>Scott Erickson</i>	

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD		Time	Date
RECORD OF: <input type="checkbox"/> VISIT <input type="checkbox"/> CONFERENCE OR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TELEPHONE CALL		1330	2/6/06
Name(s) of Person(s) contacted or in conference and location		Routing	
		Symbol	Initials
Ryan Morin			
Ketchikan, AK			
Subject L-39MS accident			
Digest			
<p>Mr. Morin reported the he was near the Texaco gas station, located on Tongass Blvd, near the airport ferry terminal. He observed the accident airplane on the north side of the road, about 100 feet above the ground. He estimated the airspeed was about 100 knots, the landing gear was up, the flaps were down, the engine power was on, and the wings were rocking. Mr. Morin said that the airplane passed over the telephone poles along the road and he saw the canopy blow off, powered by two cylinders. The airplane rolled to the left and pitched up and hit the ground tail first. He said he did not actually see the pilot seat ejection.</p>			
Conclusions, Action Taken, or Required			
Date 2/6/06	Title Air Safety Investigator	Signature <i>Scott Erickson</i>	

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD		Time	Date
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Name(s) of Person(s) contacted or in conference and location		Routing	
		Symbol	Initials
Gary Lake			
Ketchikan, AK			
[REDACTED]			
Subject L-39 accident			
<p>Digest</p> <p>In a telephone conversation with Mr. Lake on March 9, 2006, he reported that he was driving northbound on Tongass Blvd., in Ketchikan, and observed the accident airplane over the Tongass Narrows, about mid-channel. The airplane appeared to be between 100 to 150 feet with the landing gear up. He said he looked back along a visual line of sight between the Ketchikan runway and Wolf Point and saw the airplane begin a 30 to 40 degree nose-up climb. Mr. Lark said the weather conditions included about a 500 to 800 foot ceiling, with good visibility. He also said that snow began after the accident.</p>			
Conclusions, Action Taken, or Required			
Date 3/9/06	Title Air Safety Investigator	Signature Scott Erickson	

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Name (s) of Person (s) contacted or in conference and location		Routing	
		Symbol	Initials
Gary Lake			
Ketchikan, AK			
Subject L-39 accident			
<p>Digest</p> <p>In a telephone conversation with Mr. Lake on March 9, 2006, he reported that he was driving northbound on Tongass Blvd., in Ketchikan, and observed the accident airplane over the Tongass Narrows, about mid-channel. The airplane appeared to be between 100 to 150 feet with the landing gear up. He said he looked back along a visual line of sight between the Ketchikan runway and Wolf Point and saw the airplane begin a 30 to 40 degree nose-up climb. Mr. Lark said the weather conditions included about a 500 to 800 foot ceiling, with good visibility. He also said that snow began after the accident.</p>			
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Name (s) of Person (s) contacted or in conference and location		Routing	
		Symbol	Initials
Pete Halverson			
Ketchikan, AK			
Subject L-39MS accident			
<p>Digest</p> <p>Mr. Halverson reported that he was on Shoreline Drive, located near the edge of the Tongass Narrows channel. He saw the accident airplane coming down the channel, and it was about 60 feet above the water, and about 100 yards from the shore. The airplane continued down the channel and banked inland, and climbed to about 100 feet, about ¾ mile from Peninsula Point. Mr. Halverson said the engine was making noise, and the airplane was in a slight climb. He said he did not notice whether the landing gear was up or down, and he did not notice wing drop tanks. The ceiling was about 200 feet, with a visibility of about 1 mile in blowing snow, and the wind was about 15 to 20 knots.</p>			
Conclusions, Action Taken, or Required			
Date 2/16/06	Title Air Safety Investigator	Signature Scott Erickson	

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD		Time	Date
RECORD OF: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> VISIT <input type="checkbox"/> CONFERENCE OR <input type="checkbox"/> TELEPHONE CALL		1600	3/28/06
Name (s) of Person (s) contacted or in conference and location		Routing	
		Symbol	Initials
Jaime Painter			
Ketchikan, AK			
Subject L-39MS accident			
<p>Digest</p> <p>Mr. Painter reported that he was at the top of a boat ramp located across the street from the crash site. He said he heard jet engine noise, and then saw the airplane over a metal building across from his location. The airplane was about 200 feet above the ground, the wings were rocking, and the airspeed was about 100 mph. Mr. Painter said the airplane banked to the left, and engine power was pulled back. The canopy began to blow off, but he said it pivoted from the front edge about 40 degrees, and did not open completely. Mr. Painter reported that the pilot's ejection seat went through the canopy glass. He saw twin vapor trails from the pilot's seat sides as it departed the airplane, but he also thought the seat may have struck the canopy. He then saw a small drogue parachute deploy, white or red in color. He lost sight of the airplane and seat, and began a search for the pilot in the open lot area of the initial impact, but was unable to find the pilot. Mr. Painter said the attitude of the airplane was level at the time of the ejection, but the airplane nosed down when the engine power was pulled back. The landing gear was up. He indicated the visibility was good, without snow, as he could see across the channel to the airport, and the ceiling was about 500 feet.</p>			
Conclusions, Action Taken, or Required			
Date 3/28/06	Title Air Safety Investigator	Signature <i>Scott Erickson</i>	

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD		Time	Date
RECORD OF: <input type="checkbox"/> VISIT <input type="checkbox"/> CONFERENCE OR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TELEPHONE CALL		1535	3/10/06
Name (s) of Person (s) contacted or in conference and location		Routing	
		Symbol	Initials
Larry Green			
Ketchikan, AK			
Subject L-39MS accident			
<p>Digest</p> <p>Mr. Green reported that he was at his shop, located above the WalMart store, which is off Tongass Blvd. He said he observed the accident airplane about 100 to 150 feet, northbound over the channel. Mr. Green said the airplane then made a 180 degree turn near Temsco Helicopter facility, and headed toward the town. He indicated that the engine sounded labored, the nose gear was down, and the airplane was in about a 10 degree nose up climb to about 200 feet. The airplane then went out of his view behind trees. The ceiling was between 300 and 500 feet, and the visibility was good.</p>			
Conclusions, Action Taken, or Required			
Date 3/10/06	Title Air Safety Investigator	Signature <i>Scott Erickson</i>	