



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Office of Aviation Safety
Washington, D.C. 20594

November 1, 2013

Attachment 22 – Witness Statements

OPERATIONAL FACTORS

ERA13MA139

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A. WITNESS STATEMENTS

1.0 Statement: Steven Hancock

Date: February 22, 2013

Location: Via Email

Time: Approximately 2118 EST

Sent to: David Lawrence

From: Steven Hancock [mailto:]
Sent: Friday, February 22, 2013 9:18 PM
To: Lawrence David
Subject:

Steven Hancock

[REDACTED]

A&P Mechanic Standardaero Augusta, GA

Part time A&P Mechanic Spirit Aviation Thomson McDuffie Regional Airport

Brian Waggoner and I were at HQU on 2/20/2013 from 18:00 to 19:40 doing routine maintenance on Spirit Aviation's Cessna 172S N124CK. I have never performed any maintenance on N777VG nor have I witnessed any maintenance being performed on the aircraft. I did not know the pilot or passengers on the aircraft. When I left HQU at 19:40 on 2/20/2013 everything at the airport seemed to be in order nothing appeared out of the ordinary. While making a left on to Washington Rd. from Tech Dr., heading north, I noticed the taxi way runway and beacon lights where on and seemed to be functioning properly. If there is anything else you need feel free to contact me by phone or emal.

Sent from my iPad

2.0 John C Tune Airport Witness Statements

2.1 Josh Holdcraft - KJWN

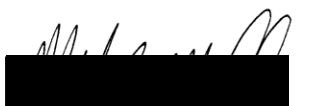
I took the pilot and co-pilot to Slow n' Low restaurant around 2 p.m. and ^{Josh} picked them up around 3 p.m. I don't recall much detail about the passengers or luggage. I recall the pilots boarding the aircraft and leaving. departure seemed normal.

Levi Holdcraft

2-23-13


2.2 Matthew McDonald - KJWM CFM Front Desk

I was not in a position to see the passengers board the aircraft or see the aircraft taxi and depart.


Matthew McDonald
CFM Front Desk

2.3 Matt Spangenberg - JWM Line Service

On Wed Feb 20th At Approx 6:15PM CST,
I saw the Pilots of 777 VG walk out and
board the Aircraft. I did not see the passengers
board. The Aircraft then Taxied out And
departed.


Mike Spangenberg
JWN Line Service

3.0 Thomson, GA Witness Statements

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF WITNESS

Date: 2/21/18
 1. Place of accident: Thomson-McDuffie County Airport Date: 2-20-18 Hour: 8:05 pm
 2. Type of aircraft: Beechcraft Jet
 3. Identification/ N Number: N777VG
 4. Name: Jason B Smith
 5. Address: [Redacted] City: Thomson State: GA
 6. Telephone: H: [Redacted] W: [Redacted] Other: _____
 7. Occupation: VP of Communication @ Joseph M. Hill Bion Centers, Inc
 8. Where were you at the time of the accident: home - in my den

Mr./Ms. Smith was asked to write in his/her own words what happened.

As a former newspaper reporter and someone who has lived by the airport for almost 9 years, I have a strong interest in planes. It started by following planes on flightaware.com to see who was actually using the local airport. I've since become able to identify many planes - especially jets - by sight. I have flown out of the airport in Thomson on a couple of occasions - both in a small Cirrus prop plane and a medium size private jet. I am very familiar with the sound's associated with the routine operation of such aircraft. On Wednesday, Feb 20, I had just heated up dinner for my daughter shortly after 8pm when I heard the roar of a jet engine. It sounded like a plane cutting on reverse thrust after landing. However, this was sustained, so I assumed the plane was taking off. As I usually do, I looked out my front window at the run way, which is about 250 yards away. I looked above the tree line for the customary location of a plane taking off and was surprised to see a jet moving at a very high rate of speed, at what seemed to be just 15-20 feet off the run way. I couldn't see the nose plane, just the flash of - I think - its undercabin lights. I thought "That's very low," and heard a huge explosion - similar to the sound of a large electrical transformer blowing up. The neighborhood immediately went dark and I realized I could no longer hear the jet engines. I could see a faint orange glow to the east. My wife had just arrived home and we immediately got in my car and left our neighborhood. Turning right onto Washington Road/52-17, we could see an orange glow and a silhouette of smoke on the eastern horizon behind the Kingsley Mill/Milliken plant. We drove around for about 20 minutes looking for the crash site, but never found a downed plane or SR-17.

[Redacted Signature]
 Signature _____ Aviation Safety Inspector

When we returned to the Kingsley Mill area, emergency personnel had responded and there was a small line of brush fires behind the plant. From what I could tell, it did not sound like the plane touched down, but I may not have been able to hear that part. However, the noise I did hear was far louder than I normally hear.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF WITNESS

Date: 2/21/13

1. Place of accident: 1259 Edmonds Date: 2/20/13 Hour: 2015

2. Type of aircraft: _____

3. Identification/ N Number: _____

4. Name: Jimmy E. Williams Jr.

5. Address: _____ City: Thomson State: Georgia

6. Telephone: H: _____ W: _____ Other: _____

7. Occupation: Firefighter/EMT

8. Where were you at the time of the accident: In front of McDonalds on Washington Rd

Mr./Ms. Jimmy Williams was asked to write in his/her own words what happened.

McDuffie Fire-Rescue was dispatched to area of Kingsley Mill
from aircraft down. I was driving North on Washington Rd about
to turn in to McDonalds. I ~~to~~ seen a bright blue flash and an
explosion. Upon my arrival found flames in the trees off of Edmund
Rd behind Kingsley Plant. Found an access Rd in to scene and
drove down a logging Rd. Approximately 60 feet from aircraft
walked a man with multiple head lacerations and complaining
of left arm pain. Checked patient for further injuries and placed
him in my truck to the primary staging area. Removed pt from
my truck and set him down to treat his injuries. ~~He~~ was
asked 3 questions to determine level of consciousness. Patient answered
only two questions correctly. Patient was asked if he knew what
happened and he said "I overshoot! I overshoot I overshoot!" ~~EMS~~
~~some~~ Patient called wife on my phone and said that "im OK"
"I'm OK". A short period later I recieved a text back from
254290-1529 stating to ~~text~~ "Have Jeremy call back. EMS arrive
and pt placed in a c collar and long spine board. Patient moved
to unit after being fully immobilized. EMS unit carried Patient
to landing zone to be flown to trauma center

Jimmy E. Williams Jr.
Signature

S. DeCosta
Aviation Safety Inspector

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF FAA IIC

Date: 2/22/2013

1. Place of Accident: Thomson, GA Date: _____ Hour: _____

2. Type of Accident: _____

3. Identification/ N Number: _____

4. Name: Keith Bounds - President / Airpor mgr

5. Address: 454 John T. Lane Rd, City: Thomson State: GA

6. Telephone: H: _____ W: [redacted]; Other: _____

7. Occupation: President

8. Pilot Certificate Number: N/A Certificate: N/A

Ratings: N/A

9. Medical Certificate: Class N/A Date: _____

Mr./Ms. Bounds was asked to write in his/her own words what happened.

I interviewed Mr. Bounds regarding the operation of the Vain Group. Mr. Bounds expressed concern about the duty day of Mr. Trammell. Mr. Bounds indicated that Mr. Trammell operated 2 or 3 times a week from the Thomson Airport and would arrive at around 0430am and then depart to other locations. The aircraft would return around 2000 the same day.

[Signature]
Stephen Da Costa
Signature

[Signature]
Aviation Safety Inspector

To: FAA & NTSB

FM: Capt. Kevin A. Perry

RE: AIR CRAFT ACCIDENT OF Hawker Beechcraft Premier Tail # N777VG SER# RB-208

Incident Date: 20 February 2013 Incident Time 2012 hrs. MCFS Case# 13658

On 20 February 2013 at approx 2010 hrs I was inside Station 2 when I heard a Jet aircraft with a missed approach. I heard the aircraft power back up trying to gain altitude. I walked to the door window towards Milikin and looked out the window. I observed a flash of orange that I took for a fireball. I never saw the lights of the aircraft I then observed a plume of what appeared to be smoke rising from behind Milikin with an orange glow. I responded to my engine and suited up and began responding to the area of Milikin and notified Dispatch of a possible aircraft crash off the airport. I then contacted Augusta tower and notified them of a possible aircraft crash. I asked them to start the notification process for the incident. I then commenced Calling for additional units and started directing them into the flight path past the runway. Fire personnel commenced a search of the area for the location of the airplane and possible access routes into the area. FF Jimmy Williams notified me that he had located the pilot on Edwards's rd and requested I respond to the incident. Upon my arrival the pilot was being treated by EMS. I contacted Life Net to see if there was a helo available to transport the pilot no local unit available. Ems contacted Air Med and they dispatched a helo to the airport for transport to Georgia Regions university Medical center in August , Ga. Crews from fire and Ems responded to the site to search for survivors. One survivor was located and carried out to the staging area and loaded into an ambulance to be transported to The same Hospital as the Pilot. Fires were suppressed by fire crews . Forestry Arrived on scene and began to plow a fire break around the outside of the crash area to stop the spread of the fire into surrounding woods. Local law enforcement set up a perimeter. Fires in the fuselage were extinguished with dry chem. Extinguishers and water extinguishers. Fatalities were located, Tagged, and marked with fire tape. All nonessential personnel from fire were removed after a primary and secondary search of the area was completed.

The statements I have made on this 21st day of February 2013 are factual and true to the best of my knowledge.



Kevin A. Perry

Captain

McDuffie County Fire Rescue

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF WITNESS

Date: 2/21/13 Thomson-McDuffie Co Airport
1. Place of accident: Thomson-McDuffie Co Airport Date: 2/20/13 Hour: 8:05 pm

2. Type of aircraft: Beechcraft jet

3. Identification/ N Number: N777VB

4. Name: Miriam H. Smith

5. Address: [redacted] City: Thomson State: GA

6. Telephone: H: N/A W: 706 [redacted] Cell: [redacted] Other: [redacted]

7. Occupation: Executive Director of nonprofit and math instructor at Augusta Technical College

8. Where were you at the time of the accident: Driveway of my yard in my car.

Mr. Ms. Miriam Smith was asked to write in his/her own words what happened.

I have lived within a couple of hundred yards of the runway at Thomson-McDuffie County airport since 2004. During those nearly nine years, I have watched hundreds of planes land and take off, including experimental aircraft, vintage planes, propeller planes, and small and large private jets. I have seen them in and out of the Thomson airport on a twin engine prop Cessna and a Cessna 4 private jet out of Kiken and Sherman. My home faces the runway, with a clear view looking over an approx. 200 yard wide over a small pond of the upper, eastern part of the runway. I can see the planes when they turn around at the top of the runway, and can usually follow them on their pattern drops for 30 seconds or so before they disappear behind the trees.

On Wednesday, Feb 20, 2013, I left the campus of Augusta Tech College on the other side of the runway at 7:56 pm, while on the phone with my grandmother's hospice nurse. I drove along part of the runway to Washita Road, turned left in between the runway and the Mr. Nike, past the bus stop on South Lake Drive which also runs parallel to the runway. I did not notice if the runway lights were on or not.

I pulled into my driveway and parked my car facing away from the airport, and heard a loud air that sounded like a huge jet. Instead of the sound decreasing or increasing like a normal landing or take-off, the noise was consistent and steadily striking loud. It was like a plane that was in full flight, not taking off or landing.

Hearing how loud it was and knowing something wasn't right, I looked in my rearview mirror, thinking there is no way that is actually a plane and wondering if it was a tornado or something. So I look at two large trees on the side of the driveway, and they were not moving. They were not moving at all.

Still hearing the sound, I glanced back and heard an explosion-type sound and saw the neighborhood and surrounding area go dark.

[redacted signature]

Signature

[redacted signature] S. Dalester

Aviation Safety Inspector

I immediately hung up the phone (at 8:05 according to my cellphone) and ran into my house to check on my husband and one-year-old daughter. My husband, a former reporter and publisher and current employee of a bible center, was already putting on his shoes and said, "Oh my God that plane crashed." We loaded our daughter in the car and headed for the scene. We reached the front entrance →

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF

Date: 2/21/2013

1. Place of Accident: Edwards Rd Date: 2-20-13 Hour: 8:10ish

2. Type of Accident: Plane Crash

3. Identification/ N Number: _____

4. Name: Travis Whitaker (OFFICER)

5. Address: [Redacted] City: Gibson State: Ga

6. Telephone: H: [Redacted] W: [Redacted] Other: [Redacted]

7. Occupation: Deputy Sheriff

8. Pilot Certificate Number: _____ Certificate: _____

Ratings: _____

9. Medical Certificate: Class _____ Date: _____

Mr./Ms. _____ was asked to write in his/her own words what happened.

At approximately 8:10 pm I was sitting the sign on Edwards Rd and Hwy 17 N. I had a job plan to go and look at a security fence runway to see if there were any plants. It started to rain and the engine started to vibrate and high RPM's and 30 seconds later the plane went into a spin and I heard a loud explosion and the engine shut off. I turned to look behind my seat and saw a large cloud of smoke and fire. I do not know if it was a possible explosion behind the engine. I dove back into the plane and saw a large fire in the woods. I ran down to the plane upon approach I was met by a man who said he was the pilot but was blind. I saw his head in the runway and saw the plane on the ground. I began to search the area for other passengers. There was a large fire on both sides of the plane. I could not approach right away. I searched the area and found the plane. The fire died during and I kicked 3 inches on the west side of the cabin. I saw a man who was sitting on the east side of the cabin still strapped in. I saw a fire and I saw a man who was sitting on the east side of the cabin. I saw a man who was sitting on the east side of the cabin. I saw a man who was sitting on the east side of the cabin.

[Redacted Signature] Signature

[Redacted Signature] S. D. Costa Aviation Safety Inspector

4.0 Captain Email to NTSB

From: J. Arthur Mozley [mailto:[Redacted]] Sent: Tuesday, June 18, 2013 4:31 PM To: Lawrence David

Subject: 3136-021 Various Claimants v. The Sky's The Limit d/b/a Executive Shuttle: FW: Jeremy Hayden Flight times.docx

Hi David:

Please see the below email from Rick concerning your question as to why the airplane was based at Thomson-McDuffie.

I will send you Jeremy's SIC logbook sign-off as soon as I locate it.
Arthur

J. Arthur Mozley, Esq.



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From: Richard Trammell [<mailto:>]
Sent: Tuesday, June 18, 2013 4:19 PM
To: J. Arthur Mozley
Subject: Re: Jeremy Hayden Flight times.docx

When N401BL, King Air 300 was scheduled to be replaced, due to engine times and total time, my recommendation was a later model King Air 350 and base it a Augusta Daniel (DNL). We sold the 300 to a company in Brazil and had to identify a replacement aircraft in 45 days due to the constraints of the reverse 1031 like kind exchange. Roth's requirements were it had to be a single pilot jet, at least 6 passengers (previously we needed more seats until they increased staffing levels at out stations) and be relatively efficient. As I was already typed in the CJ series my recommendation was a Cessna Citation CJ2 that could have been operated out of (DNL). This type proved hard to find in the short period of time available Roth was involved with a salesman that represented a CJ2, that sale fell through and the salesman steered him to the Premier Aircraft.

I told Roth that the Premier could not be operated out of DNL and it would have to be AIK, AGS or HQU. He informed me that he was building a new residence on the HQU side of town and already had a vacation home on Lake Oconee (west of HQU) and that he choose the HQU airport.

The troops were not happy as all others had longer drives. The proximity to the office was of no relevance as all parties traveled from their homes.

Rick Trammell