

Witness Statement

CEN13FA196 South Bend, IN

Friday May 3, 2013

Taken by: Peter Wentz – NTSB AS-60
Mark George – NTSB AS-60

Witness: Chris Evans – Passenger
Representative: Joel LaCourse – Lawyer

Mr. Chris Evans was one of two passengers onboard a Beechcraft Premier 390 airplane that crashed South Bend, IN on March 17, 2013.

Mr. Evan stated he started loading the Beechcraft Premier around 1:30pm in Tulsa, OK (TUL) with luggage and computer gear. He finished loading around 1:45pm. Mr. Evans and his father-in-law boarded the airplane and waited for the pilots. At around 1:50pm both pilots boarded the airplane and that was the first time Mr. Evans spoke to the pilots that day. The main cabin door was closed and the pilots taxied the airplane to the runway. The airplane took off around 1:58pm. Mr. Evans was looking out the window during liftoff and transitioned his view back into the cockpit about 3 to 5 seconds after liftoff to notice a yellow flashing light on the control panel. The light was positioned at eye level; he stated “I didn’t think much of it at the time”. During the climb Mr. Evan did notice the yellow light flash a few more times. Mr. Evans stated the cruise portion of the flight was normal; Mr. Evans noticed the small monitor in the cabin that showed the airplane at 41,000 feet. He noticed the airplane tracking along the south side of Lake Michigan. He also remembers it showing 27 miles to the destination. He stated the descent was normal with scattered clouds but he could see the airplane aligned with the runway. Mr. Evans stated at that time he noticed the instrument panel/GPS area looked black without power. He could see the pilots manually flying the airplane. He stated Wes (Pilot) turned to Steve (Co-pilot) and told him to tell the passengers to prepare for landing. The co-pilot then turned to him in the back and verbally told the two passengers to prepare for landing. Mr. Evans stated he moved his backpack that was sitting in the seat in front of him to the floor beside him and checked his lap belt. Mr. Evans felt the airplane was “coming in hot” and he became concerned when the airplane continued to fly past the gate and tower and never did touch down on the runway. The airplane banked to the right and Mr. Evans could see the pilots operating the airplane with one engine at this time. “He saw Wes turn to Steve and say, ‘We are down to one engine’”. He stated that’s when “panic hit me” but tried to control himself. The airplane made a circle back to the airport and Mr. Evans became more comfortable when he could see the runway in front of him and the airplane at a slower speed. Mr. Evans stated the airplane dropped and hit the runway the 1st time then bounced a 2nd, 3rd and 4th time, after the 4th bounce the airplane was nose high and the airplane banked right and continued. Mr. Evans also stated that as the airplane departed “things got hairy”. Mr. Evans reached for his father-in-laws hand and he stated that he was looking out the window to the right and could see the roof tops of houses and then he “blacked out.” Mr. Evans first memory after blacking out was laying in the airplane, he was gasping for air and remembers thinking to himself to get

ahold of himself and get out of the airplane. He remembers checking himself out and trying free himself. He pushed the seat in front of him away. His father-in-law was behind him and he could hear his labored breathing. Mr. Evans stated that he could hear a cell phone ringing but could not find the phone in the airplane. He could smell fuel and was trying to open the window exit next to his seat. He pulled on the exit handle but it would not move, he then pulled the fabric off the exit. Mr. Evans stated at that time he could hear someone outside the airplane. He could see emergency personnel foaming the airplane and someone prying the exit open. Mr. Evans remembers emergency personnel getting the exit opened and asking him who was on the airplane and where the airplane came from? He remembers the emergency personnel talking about getting a sawzall to cut the airplane open. He recalls bleeding from the head and being placed on a back board and removed from the airplane. Mr. Evans was then placed in the ambulance and transported to the hospital.

Mr. Evans wanted to clarify his recount the descent portion of the interview and define the instrument panel on the airplane. He stated that on the second attempt to land he saw the instrument panel was black out and he recalled the same yellow light he saw on take-off was again lite along with a red light next to the yellow light. They were both flashing.

Follow up question:

Peter Wentz

- 1) Did either pilot give you a safety briefing prior to take off?
Answer – None
- 2) Did either pilot show you a safety briefing card?
Answer-No
- 3) Did you wear your seatbelt for take-off?
Answer – yes
- 4) Did you wear both the lap belt and shoulder harness?
Answer – just the lap belt, there was no shoulder harness.
- 5) Did your father-in-law wear his seatbelt?
Answer-Yes
- 6) Did your father-in-law wear his shoulder harness?
Answer – no, just the lap belt
- 7) Had you ever flown with these pilots before?
Answer-Yes the captain but not the co-pilot.
- 8) How many times had you flown with the captain?
Answer – 3 or 4 times
- 9) Had the captain ever given you a safety briefing before take-off?
Answer-No
- 10) Did you hear either of the pilots report an emergency over the radio?
Answer – not that I could hear.
- 11) Did either of the pilots tell you to prepare for an emergency landing?
Answer-No.

Follow up question:

Mark George

12) How did you know to buckle your seatbelt?

Answer – had flown enough commercial aircraft to know that's what you did.

13) How many commercial flights have you been on?

Answer-20-30 flights

14) If you couldn't hear the pilots talking how did you know what they were saying?

Answer – could read their lips.

15) On the 2nd attempt did the airplane climb?

Answer – gradually increased and banked to the right then saw the roof tops.

16) Did you unfasten your seatbelt or emergency personnel?

Answer-did not remember unfastening it, but emergency personnel did not unfasten.

17) Did you see any others being rescued from aircraft?

Answer – No.

18) How did you know the airplane was operating with one engine?

Answer-could see captain's lips say that to the co-pilot.

19) Did the airplane sound any different?

Answer – No.

20) Did the pilot's demeanor change during the emergency?

Answer-No

21) Could you give us a list of your injuries?

- A) Head to toe lacerations
- B) Forehead and nose lacerations
- C) Broken ribs
- D) Bruised lung
- E) Compressed disc
- F) L1 thru L4 fracture
- G) Sprained left hip
- H) Left knee torn MCL
- I) Left knee torn PCL
- J) Left knee torn medial meniscus
- K) Right foot bone fracture on top of the foot
- L) Right heel-piece of broken bone
- M) Right and left sprained ankles
- N) Broken sinus cavity
- O) Abrasion around the waist from the seatbelt

22) Would you be willing to submit your medical discharge summary to us?

Answer – Yes.