

31 August 2011

Tupelo Airport Authority  
Tupelo Regional Airport  
[REDACTED]  
Tupelo, MS 38801

Aircraft Accident Report

To Whom It May Concern;

At approximately 08:00 hours on Wednesday 17 August 2011 I was starting my perimeter check. I was at the "old runway extension" when I noticed Jerry Webb, a local crop duster preparing to take-off with a white Cessna 310 with blue lettering N444YM just behind him at the hold short line. I proceeded south on the perimeter road and did not see either aircraft take off. I was about mid-field on the far west side of the airport when I received a phone call that there was an aircraft "down" on Coley Road not far from my location. I asked the tower if we were declaring an "Alert III" and was told that this was definitely an "Alert III"! I assumed it was Jerry Webb and proceeded back to Gate 1 on the east side of the field, then on to Jackson street north to Coley Road then south at the intersection of Coley and Jackson. This gave me the entire stretch of Coley Road to find the aircraft. Midway down Coley there was R-41, several fire trucks and police vehicles that had already responded to the 911 alert. I arrived at the crash scene at about 08:25. The aircraft down was not Jerry Webb's but the Cessna 310 that was taking off behind Jerry. Captain Brian Benson, who is also a Tupelo Regional Airport ARFF firefighter but on duty at Station 6 at this time, was the Incident Commander. I asked what he needed me to do. My instructions were to assist in securing the crash scene, help instruct in preserving as much evidence as possible for the proper authorities (NTSB & FAA) and help the authorities (police, firefighters, etc.) in what needs to be done at an aircraft crash scene. Once it had been determined that the crash scene was a recovery and not a rescue we redeployed the fire trucks and R41 to block the view of all the bystanders, expand the crime scene tape and started the removal of the body. Because of the extreme smell of 100LL aviation fuel and since we didn't know if the main wing tanks had been ruptured the "jaws" were used instead of using power saws. We were careful to document each part of the removal process for the NTSB and FAA who were not on the scene at this time. The firemen were also very careful to stretch heavy tarps around the crash scene to help preserve the dignity of the crash victim.

Once the pilot's body had been positively identified and the body removed from the crash scene a Unified Command Center was established and the scene was turned over to local authorities for twenty-four hour surveillance. I left the crash scene on or around 11:15.

I returned at the crash scene the next morning at around 08:00 to assist the NTSB and the FAA in their investigations and to provide the necessary hanger space for the aircraft remains for the continued investigation.

George A. Smith, Jr.  
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