



National Transportation Safety Board

Memorandum

From: Michael Huhn
Date: July 11, 2008
Subject: Telephone Interview with Ms. Hilary Swain (Biological Station Executive Director), Regarding Accident Involving Piper PA-18-150, N988PC, June 20, 2008

- The witness was the Executive Director of the Archbold Biological Station in Florida
- The station was located approximately 6 miles southeast of the accident airport
- The station was involved in the bear survey; one goal was to establish the geographic range of the bears
- The tracking collars and aircraft were used to accomplish the bears' locations
- The passenger had been involved in aerial animal surveys for approximately 20 years
- The passenger was known to be prone to airsickness; he would get sick approximately every third flight

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be "Michael Huhn", is written over a solid black rectangular redaction box.

Michael Huhn
Air Safety Investigator



National Transportation Safety Board

Memorandum

From: Michael Huhn
Date: June 22, 2008
Subject: Telephone Interview with Unidentified Witness, Regarding Accident Involving Piper PA-18-150, N988PC, June 20, 2008

- The witness telephoned the NTSB at approximately 0615 on June 22, 2008, but refused to identify himself
- He was in line behind the accident airplane at the fueling station at the accident airport on the day of the accident
- He watched the accident pilot fueling the accident airplane
- At some point during this operation, the fueling nozzle “broke” (at the swivel joint), and the hose/nozzle began spraying fuel on the airplane
- He observed the pilot “hose the airplane down” with water to clean the fuel off the exterior
- He observed the pilot “wipe down” the interior of the airplane

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Michael Huhn
Air Safety Investigator



National Transportation Safety Board

Memorandum

From: Michael Huhn
Date: July 14, 2008
Subject: Telephone Interview with Mr. Bill Teears (Boater/eyewitness to flight),
Regarding Accident Involving Piper PA-18-150, N988PC, June 20, 2008

- On the day of the accident, the witness was pleasure boating on Lake Placid with his wife and some other individuals, including children
- They saw a plane coming from the direction of the community of Placid Lakes; the airplane was flying towards the south/southeast
- The airplane attracted their attention due to its extremely low altitude; at first they thought it was a "cropduster"
- The airplane flew "over the top of the boat"
- The airplane passenger was taking pictures
- The airplane was "very, very close" and they could "clearly see the faces of the [two] persons" on board the airplane
- The witness thought that the maximum altitude of the airplane was "75 to 100" feet above the lake
- One witness on the boat said that the airplane made only "one pass" over the boat
- Another witness on the boat said that the plane circled the boat and made "one or two passes"
- The airplane was in sight for "1 to 2 minutes"
- The witnesses stated that the airplane was yellow
- The doors and/or windows of the airplane "were open"
- The boat owner was on the shore during this period, and also observed the airplane. She said the airplane was "very low"

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Michael Huhn
Air Safety Investigator



National Transportation Safety Board

Memorandum

From: Michael Huhn
Date: July 11, 2008
Subject: Email from Mr. Kevin Main (Boat occupant), Regarding Accident Involving Piper PA-18-150, N988PC, June 20, 2008

The following is the text of an email that was sent to the Executive Director of Archbold Biological Station on June 23, 2008, in response to a request from the undersigned. The email author was the Land Manager of the Archbold Biological Station in Florida. He and a colleague were working in a boat that was tied up to a monitoring buoy in Lake Annie on the day of the accident.

I cannot tell you the exact time, but I believe it was between 1130 and 1200. Their plane came in out of the south, flying low, but not abnormally low, just typical for the bear work they do (maybe 200-400 ft?). Their flight line took them over the lake, so of course they saw us. I knew it was them because I know Mason's plane. We (Keith Menges was with me) waved thinking they would continue on their course. Instead they came down and circled the boat, getting fairly low, at one point just above the water, then pulled up and headed back to the north. It is possible they were headed for the bayheads just north of Lake Annie, or maybe to the bayheads on the LPS to listen for bears in those spots before returning to the airport, but this is pure speculation. I did not see or hear anything unusual with regards to the plane or motor.

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Michael Huhn
Air Safety Investigator