

Narrative		Incident #	19-07128
Crime / Incident (Primary)	Attempt	Type	Seq
999.999 INVESTIGATION	<input type="checkbox"/>		1

On July 17, 2019 while on duty for the Harney County Sheriff's Office in Burns, Harney County, Oregon I was dispatched to a report of a glider crash located on the Alvord Desert. At approximately 1227 hrs. I advised dispatch I would be enroute from Highway 78 milepost 1.5.

While enroute dispatch advised me there was one deceased person at the glider crash location. I arrived to the scene at approximately 1357 hrs and observed wreckage of what appeared to be a white in color glider, bearing tail #N112AJ on the Alvord Desert. I activated my department issued body camera. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Ranger George Orr arrived to the scene to assist with the investigation along with Sergeant Lucas McLain of the Harney County Sheriff's Office.

I conducted an initial interview with a male on scene who witnessed the glider crash. I identified the male as Clee Lloyd. Mr. Lloyd is a retired physician. I asked Mr. Lloyd if the deceased male pilot, later identified as David Kibby had any identification on him. Mr. Lloyd said after the crash at approximately 1230 hrs he checked Mr. Kibby for pulse. Mr. Lloyd said Mr. Kibby was unresponsive and was not breathing. Mr. Lloyd stated Mr. Kibby had major facial and head injuries. Mr. Lloyd monitored Mr. Kibby for signs of life for approximately ten (10) minutes.

At this time I began to photograph the crash scene. I started my initial photographs from where I was informed by Mr. Lloyd was the location where the glider Mr. Kibby was piloting had first contacted the ground. I observed in the initial impact point what appeared to be fragments of the glider Mr. Kibby was piloting. I continued to photograph the scene working towards the fuselage and Mr. Kibby. At one of the points of impact I observed a yellow in color rope, the rope appeared to be sheared or pulled apart on one end. The rope was located near where the cockpit of the glider impacted the ground.

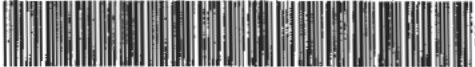
After photographing the initial crash scene I took photos of Mr. Kibby. I observed what appeared to be massive trauma to Mr. Kibby's legs, arms, head and facial area. I observed very little blood at or near the body of Mr. Kibby. I observed Mr. Kibby wearing what appeared to be a parachute. The left leg of Mr. Kibby appeared to have what looked like a compound fracture and was almost completely amputated. Located near the body of Mr. Kibby was the pilot's seat from the glider.

After completing my initial photos of the scene I again interviewed Mr. Lloyd. I asked Mr. Lloyd to explain what he observed. Mr. Lloyd said at the time of the crash he was standing on the flight line assisting another pilot getting into his glider. Mr. Lloyd said he did not witness Mr. Kibby take off but did observe the crash at the time of impact.

Mr. Lloyd said during the time Mr. Kibby was taking off the weather conditions consisted of sunny, partly cloudy skies with approximately a five (5) mile per hour (mph) wind. Mr. Lloyd stated the gliders are launched from the ground using a tow vehicle using approximately a four thousand (4,000) foot cable. I asked Mr. Lloyd approximately how fast the ground vehicle is going before the gliders can take off. Mr. Lloyd said the gliders when taking off will start flying at thirty eight (38) miles per hour. Mr. Lloyd said normally the tow vehicle is going between sixty (60) and sixty-five (65) miles per hour. Mr. Lloyd stated the pilot of the glider once airborne releases the tow cable from inside the cockpit.

I asked Mr. Lloyd if Mr. Kibby had any family members located at the scene. Mr. Lloyd informed me

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members of the glider club had been in contact with other members in the Portland, Oregon area and they were attempting to contact next of kin. I asked Mr. Lloyd approximately how long had the glider club been coming to the Alvord Desert to fly. Mr. Lloyd said fifty (50) years. At this time I concluded my initial interview with Mr. Lloyd.

The second male I interviewed on scene I identified as Paul Johnson. I asked Mr. Johnson if he observed the takeoff or the crash of the glider being piloted by Mr. Kibby. Mr. Johnson stated he was tending to his own glider at the time of the accident. Mr. Johnson said he heard the launch start in regards to Mr. Kibby's glider. Mr. Johnson said he turned back around towards his glider when he heard a something and turned back around towards the launch area. Mr. Johnson said he observed the glider piloted by Mr. Kibby "nose way up". Mr. Johnson stated he watched the launch parachute tear away at this time.

Mr. Johnson said at that point the glider was "nose high". Mr. Johnson said the glider then came over on its left side coming towards the ground nose first. Mr. Johnson said he believed the left wing and nose of the glider struck the ground approximately the same time. I asked Mr. Johnson what could cause the glider to pitch nose up. Mr. Johnson said it could have been a failure of the controls of the glider or pilot error. Mr. Johnson said the first part of the launch is the "riskiest part". Mr. Johnson said he believed the most likely scenario was Mr. Kibby "got hit by a gust of wind" which lifted his right wing. At this time I concluded my initial interview with Mr. Johnson.

While on scene I spoke with Maja Smith with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) by phone. I also contacted dispatch and requested Lafollette's Chapel be notified. I again interviewed Mr. Lloyd about the accident confirm weather conditions. Mr. Lloyd again stated the wind speed at the time of takeoff was approximately five (5) mph, blowing from the southwest.

I again photographed the crash scene beginning at the first point of impact. During the investigation at the scene it appeared that when the glider's cockpit came in contact with the ground Mr. Kibby was ejected. After photographing the scene I interviewed the female driver of the tow vehicle, identified as Christina Larson. I advised Ms. Larson I was recording. I asked Ms. Larson to describe what she observed prior to the accident. Ms. Larson said the gliders were being ground launched using a vehicle to get the gliders airborne. Ms. Larson stated the tow cable is several thousand feet long.

Ms. Larson said "it started off as a normal tow" referring to towing the glider Mr. Kibby was piloting. Ms. Larson said she idled forward with the tow vehicle to take the slack out of the tow cable. Ms. Larson said when the pilot says go you are supposed to accelerate to get the glider off the ground. Ms. Larson said she was not all the way through the acceleration when her spotter a male, later identified as Ian Klein yelled "stop, stop, stop". Ms. Larson said at this point she stopped the tow vehicle.

I asked Ms. Larson approximately how fast the tow vehicle was traveling at the time of the accident. Ms. Larson said when her spotter Mr. Klein yelled for her to stop she was not at full acceleration. Ms. Larson said she was traveling at fifty five (55) mph. I asked Ms. Larson if 55 mph was full acceleration. Ms. Larson shook her head no and said 70 mph is full acceleration. Again Ms. Larson stated she was not even at full acceleration. I asked Ms. Larson if she is alone in the tow vehicle. Ms. Larson said no the spotter Mr. Klein was in the vehicle with her and his job is to tell the tow driver when the glider is off the

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ground.

I asked Ms. Larson if she has operated the tow vehicle before. Ms. Larson said "yes". I asked Ms. Larson approximately how many times she has operated the tow vehicle while launching gliders. Ms. Larson said she has been flying gliders for three years. Ms. Larson said "I have performed a lot of these ground launches". I asked Ms. Larson as the tow vehicle operator when the pilot releases the tow cable if the tow vehicle operator feels the release. Ms. Larson said "yes the truck accelerates". I asked Ms. Larson if she had ever been to the Alvord Desert prior to the accident. Ms. Larson stated this was her first time. At this time I concluded my interview with Ms. Larson.

I interviewed Mr. Klein. I asked Mr. Klein what he observed prior to the accident. Mr. Klein said the towing of the glider started out normal. Mr. Klein said the tow vehicle was notified by Mr. Kibby the pilot to accelerate. Mr. Klein said he observed the glider come off the ground and it looked like it was at proper attitude. Mr. Klein stated shortly after the glider became airborne it crashed. I asked Mr. Klein as a spotter if it seemed like the glider was pitched nose high.

Mr. Klein stated the glider is approximately one mile behind the tow vehicle and that everything looked normal at first, when he noticed something was wrong "it was instantly wrong". Mr. Klein said there was "no warning". I asked Mr. Klein how long he has been involved with gliders. Mr. Klein said three years. Mr. Klein stated he has done numerous launches as well as being a spotter. Mr. Klein said after the accident he contacted 911. At this time I concluded my interview with Ms. Larson and Mr. Klein.

While at the scene I was informed Mr. Kibby's next of kin had not been located yet. I advised dispatch to contact the Clackamas County Sheriff's Office to have them assist with contacting the family for a death notification. At this time the NTSB released the crash scene. Lafollette's Chapel arrived to the scene and took possession of the body. I was advised by dispatch the Medical Examiner would meet at Lafollette's Chapel once they arrived back in Burns, Oregon.

The glider club Mr. Kibby was associated with is the Willamette Valley Soaring Club based out of North Plains, Oregon. The glider club has been flying on the Alvord Desert for approximately fifty (50) years. After the NTSB released the crash scene members of the club gathered the glider and Mr. Kibby's other belongings and secured them for safe keeping.

A copy of this report will be forwarded to the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Harney County Medical Examiner. Any additional information in regards to this incident will be added to a supplemental report.

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Title	Mr. Giddens Interview		
Reported	07/26/2019	12:05	Friday

On July 24, 2019 while on duty for the Harney County Sheriff's Office in Burns, Harney County, Oregon I spoke with a male identified as Jayce Giddens by phone. On July 23, 2019 I received an email from Mr. Giddens which included photographs he had taken at the time of the glider crash on the Alvord Desert.

Mr. Giddens said he and his girlfriend were driving by at, or near the location where the gliders were launching from on the Alvord Desert. Mr. Giddens said he stopped to take photos of the gliders as they were taking off.

Mr. Giddens stated he was photographing the glider being piloted by Mr. Kibby as it was taking off and continued to photograph it as it gained altitude. Mr. Giddens stated at one point the glider was at or near vertical before banking to the left. The photos I received from Mr. Giddens show the glider piloted by Mr. Kibby taking off from the Alvord Desert.

The photos also show the glider gaining altitude after taking off. In several of the photos taken by Mr. Giddens it clearly shows the toe cable, cable parachute and the yellow in color tow rope. The photos also show as the glider was gaining altitude the yellow in color tow rope becoming slack and continuing to become slacker as the glider gained altitude.

The photos also appear to show as the glider kept gaining altitude eventually the tow cable and yellow in color tow rope became tight at which point the glider was banking hard left as witnesses on scene at the time had described. The photos also show what appears to be the glider just after impacting the ground.

At this time I have no further information in regards to this incident. A copy of the photos I received from Mr. Giddens will be included with this report. A copy of this supplemental report and photos will be forwarded to the FAA, NTSB and the BLM.

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