

National Transportation Safety Board

Office of Research and Engineering

Washington, DC 20594



Medical Factual Memorandum for Record

May 7, 2025

A. CASE

NTSB ID: ANC23FA074
Location: Saint Mary's, Alaska
Date: September 12, 2023

B. MEDICAL SPECIALIST

Specialist Turan Kayagil, MD, FACEP
National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, DC

C. DETAILS

1.0 Description of Review

For purposes of evaluating the pilot for potentially impairing substances and potentially impairing medical conditions, the above Medical Specialist reviewed the following sources of medical information, along with selected relevant regulation, medical literature, and investigator reports.

- Final Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) medical case review
- Autopsy report (including NMS Labs toxicology report)
- FAA Forensic Sciences Laboratory toxicology report

2.0 Summary of Medical Facts

The 57-year-old male pilot's last aviation medical examination was August 11, 2023. At that time, he reported having high blood pressure and using the prescription blood pressure medication atenolol. His high blood pressure was noted to be qualified under Conditions Aviation Medical Examiners Can Issue (CACI)

criteria. He was issued a second-class medical certificate limited by a requirement to use corrective lenses to meet vision standards at all required distances.

The Alaska State Medical Examiner Office performed the pilot's autopsy. According to the pilot's autopsy report, his cause of death was multiple blunt force injuries, and his manner of death was accident. His autopsy identified hypertensive and atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease, including thickening of the left cardiac ventricle and an area of plaque causing 90% narrowing of a proximal diagonal branch of the left anterior descending coronary artery. The coronary arteries were otherwise without evidence of disease. The remainder of the autopsy, including visual and microscopic examination of the heart, did not identify other significant natural disease.

At the request of the Medical Examiner's Office, NMS Labs performed toxicological testing of postmortem femoral blood from the pilot; this testing did not detect any tested-for substances.¹ The FAA Forensic Science Laboratory also performed toxicological testing of postmortem specimens from the pilot; this testing detected metoprolol in femoral blood and urine.²

Metoprolol is a prescription medication that can be used as part of treatment for high blood pressure, certain arrhythmias, and certain types of heart failure. Metoprolol is not generally considered impairing. Metoprolol and atenolol belong to the same medication class (cardioselective beta-blockers).

Submitted by:

Turan Kayagil, MD, FACEP
Medical Officer

¹ The NMS Labs toxicology report listed tested-for substances as: amphetamines, barbiturates, benzodiazepines, buprenorphine/metabolite, cannabinoids, cocaine/metabolites, fentanyl/acetyl fentanyl, methadone/metabolite, methamphetamine/MDMA, opiates, oxycodone/oxymorphone, phencyclidine, acetone, ethanol, isopropanol, and methanol.

² The FAA Forensic Sciences Laboratory has the capability to test for around a thousand substances including toxins, prescription and over-the-counter medications, and illicit drugs. The laboratory also routinely reports glucose levels in vitreous and urine if suitable specimens are available. The laboratory considers postmortem glucose levels to be abnormal if above 100 mg/dL in urine or above 125 mg/dL in vitreous fluid, as noted on the [FAA Forensic Sciences Laboratory methodology webpage](#). The choice of these values is discussed in FAA Aerospace Medicine Technical Report [DOT/FAA/AM-00/22](#).