



## Incident/Investigation Report

Agency: ACSO

Case Number: 11CN15000343

Date: 01/20/2015 15:20:35

### Assisting Officers

BERLINSKI, WALTER

COSTER, GEOFFRY S

### Notes/Narratives

On 01/11/2015 at approximately 1246 hrs I, Deputy Graham, was dispatched to the area of E 160th Ave and Watkins Road, Adams County, State of Colorado on a report of an aircraft crash. While en-route I was advised a crash site was located to the north off of E 160th Ave between Watkins Rd and Imboden Road.

On scene I found multiple first responders from Greater Brighton Fire Rescue (ENG 54), Hudson Fire Rescue (Engine #28033 Truck #2803), Platte Valley Ambulance (M57 staffed by J. Wheeler, J. Christenson). I also met with Weld County Sheriff's deputies Darron Spencer and Mark Mellon. All of the aforementioned personnel were on scene upon my arrival. Just off the dirt road was extensive debris from an aircraft. Close to the area of impact I observed a mangled body of an unknown occupant of the aircraft. Medical staff from Platte Valley Ambulance M57 contacted Platte Valley medical center and spoke to a Dr. Carey Cuprisin who made a field pronouncement of death at 1310 hrs.

While on scene I took multiple digital photographs of the debris field and maintained scene security. The digital photographs have been submitted with this report. I also obtained GPS coordinates at the area of impact (39 deg 59` 29`` N 104 deg 35` 36`` W).

While on scene awaiting the arrival of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Adams County Coroner a male party identified as Joseph P. Thibodeau arrived on scene making himself know at approximately 1540 hrs. Mr. Thibodeau advised me that he believed he knew the identity of the deceased pilot. Mr. Thibodeau told me he observed his neighbor who he identified as "Wade Tefft" take off from Van Aire Airport, a private residential air park located at [REDACTED], in his Piper Arrow at approximately 1300 hrs. While photographing the scene I observed an owner's manual in the debris field for a Piper Arrow aircraft as well as observed Piper brand markings on the aircraft debris. Mr. Thibodeau is an acquaintance of "Wade Tefft" and I asked if he knew if the aircraft was in working order. Mr. Thibodeau did advise the aircraft was in proper order. Mr. Thibodeau also made mention that Mr. Tefft's wife identified to me as "Nicole Tefft" who had told "Wade Tefft" that she no longer wanted to be in a relationship with him. I asked Mr. Thibodeau if he thought Mr. Tefft was suicidal and crashed intentionally. Mr. Thibodeau told me that he didn't believe suicide was in Mr. Tefft's character. Mr. Tefft was later identified as a Wade Tefft [REDACTED]. Mr. Thibodeau completed a written statement that has been submitted with this report.

At approximately 1600 hrs Josh Pritchard, an airworthiness inspector with the FAA arrived on scene. I briefed Mr. Pritchard of what information I had obtained and advised him of the information Mr. Thibodeau provided me. At approximately 1605 hrs another male party later identified as James Seader contacted me on scene. Mr. Seader said he saw the report of the crash on the news. Mr. Seader further advised he saw an aircraft flying west and abruptly made a hard right turn to the east. Mr. Seader then saw this aircraft disappear while losing altitude. Mr. Seader didn't think anything of this until seeing the aircraft crash coverage on the news. Mr. Seader completed a written statement that has been submitted with this report.

I continued to maintain scene security until the arrival of the Adams County Crime Scene Unit and the coroner. At approximately 1645 hrs the crime scene unit, Mr. Pritchard and Deputy Coroner Kip Hoover entered the scene together to conduct their investigation.

I cleared the scene at approximately 1725 hrs when relieved by Deputy Brooks.

I had no further involvement in this matter.



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### Supplement Information

|                     |                    |                              |
|---------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Supplement Date     | Supplement Type    | Supplement Officer           |
| 01/11/2015 16:13:48 | OFFICER SUPPLEMENT | [REDACTED] BERLINSKI, WALTER |
| Contact Name        |                    | Supervising Officer          |
|                     |                    | [REDACTED] REIGENBORN, RICK  |

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### Supplement Notes

On 01/11/15 at about 1307 hours, I was dispatched to the area of 160th Ave and Watkins Rd in reference to a airplane crash. On scene, I spoke with Deputy Graham who was already taken pictures of the scene and gathering information.

I was asked to do a neighborhood canvas to see if any one heard or saw the airplane crash. I went to [REDACTED] and spoke with Kurt Simons. Kurt told me at about 1250 hours, he heard a loud bang, but thought it was gun shots, because people have been hunting geese in the fields. Then I went to [REDACTED] and spoke with Walter Giszler. Walter told me he did not hear anything he has been watching football all day. Then I went to [REDACTED] and had negative contact. A neighborhood canvass form was completed.

I attempted to contact the original reporting party, J.D. Thompson, from Weld County but I have negative contact. I tried multiple times with negative contact but I left him a message to call me. As of 1630 hours, he has not returned my telephone call.

I cleared the scene and have no further involvement in this case.



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## Supplement Information

|                                        |                                       |                                                    |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Supplement Date<br>01/12/2015 17:28:09 | Supplement Type<br>OFFICER SUPPLEMENT | Supplement Officer<br>[REDACTED] BERLINSKI, WALTER |
| Contact Name                           |                                       | Supervising Officer<br>[REDACTED] REIGENBORN, RICK |

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## Other Persons Involved

|                                     |                    |                                         |                          |          |                   |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| Name Code<br><b>Reporting Party</b> | Seq. #<br><b>1</b> | Name (Last, First, M)<br>THOMPSON, JOHN | Race<br>U                | Sex<br>M | DOB<br>[REDACTED] |
| Address<br>[REDACTED]               |                    |                                         | Home Phone<br>[REDACTED] |          |                   |
| Employer Name/Address<br>/          |                    |                                         | Business Phone           |          |                   |

## Supplement Notes

On 01/12/15 at 1645 hours, I was dispatched a telephone message to call John Thompson [REDACTED].

John Thompson said he heard a airplane power up at about 1230 hours on 01/11/15 in the area of 168th Ave and Watkins Rd and then he heard a very loud bang and did not hear the airplane anymore. He said he got in vehicle and started to search the area looking in all the farm fields. He said he drove eastbound on 160th Ave towards Imboden Rd when he noticed what he thought was an airplane in the field just northwest of Imboden Rd.

John Thompson told he called 911 right away and was speaking with Weld County dispatch.



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### Supplement Notes

On 01/11/15 at 16:39Hrs I went to 160th Ave and Watkins Rd Adams County Colorado, 80601 on a call of a plane crash. Upon my arrival I secured the crash scene by placing my car across the road that leads into the field where the plane crashed.

At 17:58Hrs I saw the Adams County Coroners Van leave the scene. At 18:15Hrs I saw the Detectives Nia French and R Coffee leave the crime scene. At 18:20Hrs I saw the Agent from the FAA leave.

At 18:56Hrs I talked to Larry Balzano who lives at [REDACTED]. Larry Balzano told me that on 01/11/15 around 13:00Hrs he was working in his barn when he heard a small plane. Larry said that he walked outside and saw a small plane flying about 300` in the air headed in a Northeasterly direction Larry said that he could clearly hear the engine running. Larry said that the planes landing gear was up and that the engine sounded like it was running fine. Larry said that he watched it fly over and then went back to working. Larry said that a short time later he heard what appeared to be a muffled boom. Larry said that it wasn't until he watched the news and that he remembered seeing the plane and hearing the boom.

On 01/11/15 at 19:47Hrs I received a radio call to call Sue Jolliffe of [REDACTED]. I called Sue and she told me that between 12:00Hrs and 13:00Hrs on 01/11/15 she saw a small white plane flying very low in an Easterly direction over her home. Sue said that she could hear the plane`s engine and it appeared to be working fine. Sue said that she saw the story about the crash on the news and she thought the information she gave me may help with the investigation.

On 01/11/15 at 20:55Hrs I talked to Caroline Gaudiani and Todd Johnson who told me that on 01/11/15 around 12:00Hrs they were watching a football game on TV when they heard the engine of a small plane flying low over their home at [REDACTED].

Both Todd and Caroline said that the engine sounded like it was revving up. Todd said that the plane`s engine sounded like it was running fine.

After all the investigative personnel left I secured the road until I was relieved by Deputy Ehrhardt at 01:00hrs.



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## Supplement Information

|                     |                     |                             |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| Supplement Date     | Supplement Type     | Supplement Officer          |
| 01/20/2015 15:19:01 | FOLLOW UP           | ██████████ TREASURE, SHAUNA |
| Contact Name        | Supervising Officer |                             |

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## Supplement Notes

On January 12, 2015, I was requested to respond to the area of 160th Avenue and Watkins Road, Adams County, Colorado, on a plane crash.

When I arrived I spoke to Sergeant Shane Heiter who advised me that the victim, possibly identified as Wade Tefft ██████████ lived at ██████████. The plane was registered to Wade Tefft. Sergeant Heiter asked that I respond to the Delta Court address and speak to Wade Tefft's family.

I responded to the address and I spoke to Joseph Thibodeau who lives across the street and who is a good friend of Wade Tefft. Joseph Thibodeau stated he saw Wade Tefft take off from the runway earlier in the day. He stated Wade Tefft and his wife had decided to divorce on January 1, 2015 and that he had invited Wade Tefft to come to his house that day to watch the Bronco game.

I then spoke to Nicole Tefft ██████████ who is Wade Tefft's wife. Nicole Tefft told me that she saw the plane crash on the news and that she already knew that it was Wade Tefft. She also stated she believed he committed suicide. Nicole Tefft stated she had told Wade Tefft on January 1, 2015 that she wanted a divorce and that she was purchasing a house nearby so that their children could attend the same school and so that Wade Tefft could continue having contact with them. Nicole Tefft stated that Wade Tefft was drinking heavily and that he had gambling debts. She also stated that Wade Tefft spent a considerable amount of time working on his plane. He rarely spent time with the family and he contributed very little to the household expenses. She stated approximately five years ago Wade Tefft told her that if she ever left him he would fly his plane into the ground and kill himself. Nicole Tefft provided a hairbrush for DNA comparison.

I transported the hairbrush to the Adams County Coroner's Office. I was later advised that they identified Wade Tefft through a fingerprint comparison. A request of the autopsy report was made to the Coroner's Office.

I spoke to NTSB Agent Aaron Sauer who stated that the plane had no mechanical issues and he provided a copy of his report.

No further information is available.