

Statement from Douglas M. Case regarding aircraft accident taking place at BTL airport 8/27/15 2016Z.

While working the position of LC/GC combined I cleared N227TB for takeoff from RWY 23R from intersection "E". While on takeoff roll I noticed the aircraft wandering erratically on the runway, not tracking a straight line. Once the aircraft got airborne, he continued to fly erratically, climbing, descending, turning and turning at too low of an altitude. He actually had veered out towards the west, not even staying over the runway. His flight was up and down, left and right. Erratic is the best way to describe it. He finally started to gain some altitude out towards the west and then he made a circling left turn back towards the approach end of RWY 5L.

Shortly after clearing N227TB for takeoff, I cleared W55 (a WMU SR22 aircraft) for takeoff at the approach end of RWY 23R (applying anticipated separation). When N227TB became airborne, and watching his difficulties, I immediately told W55 to exit RWY 23R he was just entering, which he did. N227TB was cleared to land RWY 5L. He had the entire length of RWY 5L to land, but continued to basically fly a low approach. This was the most stable time of his flight. Realizing the aircraft was having major difficulties, I advised him he was cleared to land on any RWY.

Near the northeast end of RWY 23R he made a tight, zig-zagging 180° turn back towards RWY 23R. He went approximately 1,800' beyond the approach end of RWY 23R and made a sudden left nosedive and hit the ground nose first approximately 300' south of RWY 23R. Within 2 seconds, as I picked up the crash phone the plane burst into flames.