



MIDLAND COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

GARY PAINTER
Sheriff

[REDACTED]
MIDLAND, TEXAS 79702
[REDACTED]

ED KREVIT
Chief Deputy

August 17, 2015

Corey Wehmeyer
Federal Aviation Administration
Lubbock, Texas

Statement regarding aircraft accident 8-10-15 in Midland, Texas.

On Monday, 8-10-15 at about 12:45pm, myself and Captain Rory McKinney met with Trace Dennis at Midland Air Park to ride in a Gyrocopter Mr. Dennis was piloting. We first met with Trace Dennis at the 137th annual training session of the Sheriff's Association of Texas in San Antonio, Texas on July 27. Mr. Dennis was exhibiting a gyrocopter for possible use in patrolling the County for observation and spotting potential violations of the law. Mr. Dennis then stated that he may be able to come to Midland and give us a ride to better determine the usefulness of a gyrocopter in law enforcement. On Monday, 8-10-15, at Midland Air Park I made contact with Trace while the fuel truck was finishing the fueling of the gyrocopter. When the truck pulled away Trace explained the equipment and gauges in the passenger seating area and what we were going to do from taxiing to take off and what to expect. Trace showed me how to enter the craft and what to step on and what to grab to get seated then he helped me with securing my shoulder harness and seat belt. Trace checked the clearance on the controls, looked around the craft then looked toward the runway and helped me with the earphones and then he entered the craft secured his shoulder harness and seat belt then started the engine and we moved toward the runway. We made a right turn stopping at the runway then he used the radio to announce our intentions and we made a right turn onto the runway travelled a little ways then he made a u turn stopping on the right side of the runway and engaged the rotor. He said the rotor had to reach at least 200 rpm (there was a small gauge mounted on the top left of the pilots seat back that I could watch), after reaching the 200 rpm we moved forward and took off headed South. After getting past Wadley Street we banked to the right and shortly after started a descent headed for a city park. Just above the ground Trace stated "too heavy, too heavy" then we hit the ground angled a little back, hitting on the two back wheels, snapped forward then rolled to the right side with the rotor striking the ground about twice then we skidded about 6 to 8 feet coming to rest on the right side. Trace got out and asked if I was ok and assisted me in getting out of the shoulder harness and seat belt since my weight was on my right arm and I had difficulty finding the release buttons. I called the dispatcher to stop the fire engines and ambulance since there were no injuries. Trace eventually went to the E.R. by ambulance to get checked out due to back pain. Lots of emergency vehicles arrived, one of which was Trooper Weimer from DPS who investigated the accident.

[REDACTED] 8-17-15



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Chief Deputy

August 18, 2015

Tom Latson
Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board Houston, Texas

Reference gyrocopter (N743SS) accident, 8-10-15 in Midland, Texas

Mr. Latson, I will attempt to answer the questions you posed to me in written form on 8-12-15 in the order you posed.

1. Will mark where I think we departed from on the map provided and send via e-mail.
2. Will provide the taxi route as best I remember on the same map as #1.
3. Will include where I think we took off from and where we became airborne, as best as I can remember.
4. The height is hard for me to estimate but maybe 1,000 to 1,500 feet and the speed was slow.
5. Did not see any cockpit indications and have no idea what they were.
6. The pilot said there was not enough air at that temperature and the wind seemed to die out and just before we impacted he said "too heavy, too heavy".
7. I had watched the fuel truck put fuel in but do not know how much.
8. I did not take any cell phone video.
9. A gentleman on the ground came up and said he videoed the incident, his information was taken by Trooper Weimer, the accident investigator.
10. My weight is [REDACTED]

Respectfully Submitted,

[REDACTED]
Gary Painter, Sheriff
Midland County



2000 ft

START HERE

TAXI 2

3. TOOK OFF

STARTED TO INCREASE
AORR RPM

Q Zoned

Google Earth