

Inspector Statement 7/12/2016

On July 7, 2016, about 0605 central time, an Air Tractor, AT-602, N967JB, struck power line wires and impacted the ground while spraying a corn field crop located approximately 5.5 miles NNE of Kennett Memorial airport (TKX). The pilot, who was the sole occupant, was fatally injured. The aircraft was destroyed during impact with the ground. The airplane was registered to Bootheel Ag Air Services LLC and was operated by the pilot as a 14 CFR §137 agricultural flight originating from the Hornersville Memorial Airport (37M).

There were no witnesses' to the accident. According to the chemical loader person, the aircraft departed 37M at approximately 0541 central time with a load of 375 gallons liquid chemical solution to spray a 75 acre corn field crop. The pre impact flight path was in a northerly direction. High power electrical lines, running in an east-west direction, were located approximately in the middle of the corn field being sprayed. Near the eastern edge of the corn field crop, two electrical power lines were found severed and a third damaged in line with the direction of the flight path. A section of aircraft spray boom was bent around and hanging from the third damaged power line. The aircraft point of impact was located in a bean field crop, adjacent to the corn field crop and approximately 1000 feet from the damaged electrical power lines.

The right hand wing tip section and aileron were found approximately 50 feet north of the electrical power line damage and resting just inside the corn field crop. The aircraft ground impact zone was located in the bean field crop and was approximately 200 feet long. Several deep prop strikes were found in the ground near the beginning of impact zone. The propeller blades, propeller hub, engine and landing gear were found separated from the aircraft main structure. The main fuselage, remaining wing and tail sections were found at the end of impact zone. The cockpit and tail section came to rest pointing in a southerly direction.

Nothing was noted that indicated a pre impact aircraft flight control irregularity. The aircraft turbine engine blades were bent in a manner that indicates the engine was making power at the time of impact. Fuel quantity could not be verified but a fuel spill was noted underneath the wing section. There was no evidence of remaining spray chemical solution on scene. The shoulder harness air bag restraint system was found in the deployed state.

The aircraft hour meter (Hobbs) displayed 889.9 hours and had a placard that stated: "ADD 135.7 for TT". Aircraft maintenance records indicate the last airframe annual and propeller inspection was performed December 7, 2015 at an aircraft Hobbs time of 787.7 hours. A 300 hour engine inspection was completed June 16, 2016 at an aircraft total time of 833.0 hours. Airworthiness Directive records indicate the aircraft was in compliance and current at the time of accident.

Pilot logbooks have not been made available as of 7/12/2016.

Dennis Mueller