

17-6035

Date/Time Printed: 12/20/2017 14:59:31
Printed By / Reason: 5122 / Aaron Sauer NTSB

Owner Applied #

Recovered Date

Additional Info

NARRATIVE

On the above date and time, I was stopped at a red light on east bound Chesterfield Airport Rd and Long Rd. As I waited for the light to change, I observed a small plane flying west bound at a low altitude over 110 Long Rd (BP Gas Station). The left wing (port side) of the plane struck the overhead awning of the gas station and the plane crashed just south of Chesterfield Airport Rd. Upon impact, the plane burst into flames. At that time, I notified dispatch for the fire department and more assist cars.

As I arrived on scene I positioned my vehicle on north bound Long Rd, just south of Chesterfield Airport Rd to block traffic. I observed the nose of the plane pointing in a north western direction and the left wing (port side) of the plane had been destroyed. The plane was engulfed in flames.

I began assisting others in an attempt to extinguish the fire and get any occupants out. Several people had retrieved fire extinguishers and were attempting to put the fire out while others were attempting to break the windows to the plane, however, both were unsuccessful. After several minutes, when all of the fire extinguishers were empty and the plane was fully engulfed in flames, the area was cleared for the arrival of the fire department.

Prior to Monarch's arrival, the gas pumps were shut down and a nearby gas tanker truck was advised to move away from the area.

Upon Monarch's arrival, the flames were extinguished and the scene was made safe. It was determined that there was only one occupant, the pilot, who was declared deceased by Monarch Paramedic Kwiatkowski [REDACTED] at 1507 hours.

Along with Monarch Fire Department; West County, Cottleville, Metro West, and Spirit Airport Fire Departments responded to assist.

While the plane was being extinguished I made contact with several witnesses who saw the plane prior to and during the impact.

Witness Robert Turner explained that he was on Long Rd near Edison when he observed a plane flying too low. He saw one of the wings of the plane dip and strike the awning of the BP gas station. After that, when the plane struck the ground, he stated that it immediately went up in flames. He stopped his vehicle and grabbed a fire extinguisher from someone in an attempt to extinguish the flames but was unsuccessful.

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Witnesses Christopher and Brittany Donovan were driving north bound on Long Road, just south of Chesterfield Airport Rd. They observed an airplane flying unusually low. They stated the plane had made a sharp turn and struck the awning of the gas station. The plane then struck the ground and caught on fire. Christopher explained that he emptied two fire extinguishers in an attempt to extinguish the blaze.

I then contacted David Schubert, Deputy Director of Aviation for Spirit of St Louis Airport, who was able to provide additional details of the aircraft. He described the plane as a 2001 Beechcraft Bonanza B36TC, single engine prop plane. It was registered to Wings West LLC out of Las Vegas. The pilot, only listed on the flight plan as, Jim Smith, had left Albuquerque, New Mexico for St. Louis and did not make any stops between take off and the crash. At an unknown time, the pilot made communication with an air flight tower notifying them of an emergency, as he had lost engine power. The pilot explained to the tower that he was not going to make it to a runway.

The pilot was later identified as James L. Smith [REDACTED]. Next of kin was notified by PO Pollman DSN [REDACTED]. See his supplement for further information.

PO Carter DSN [REDACTED] arrived on scene to assist me in photographing the crash. See his ID supplement.

Forensic Investigator, Krista Smith of the St. Louis County Medical Examiner's office, was notified regarding the death of James Smith and responded to the scene shortly after. She provided me with the Medical Examiner's report number of 17-8676.

FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) Agents responded and I spoke with Travis Schwien, badge [REDACTED]. Agent Schwien advised that his investigation was complete and the body could be removed from the plane.

At that time, Monarch Fire Fighters removed the body from the plane, which was then released to Krista Smith.

The plane was left on scene until NTSB (National Transportation Safety Board) responds to complete their investigation.

Any additional information and witness statements will be included in supplemental form.

Nothing further at this time.

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ADDITIONAL PARTY INFORMATION

Person Role(s) WITNESS

Last Name	JOHNSON	Middle Name	L
First Name	RENEE	Suffix Name	
SSN	[REDACTED]	Ethnicity	NOT OF HISPANIC ORIGIN
License Number	[REDACTED]	License State	MISSOURI
Race	WHITE	Sex	FEMALE
DOB	[REDACTED]	Age	64
Resident Status	NON-RESIDENT		

Additional Info

Street Address	[REDACTED] ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI, 63125
Apt/Suite/Rm #	Location Desc
Area Code	Contact Name
Phone #	Ext.
Email Address	

VEHICLE INFORMATION

Owner Name RENEE JOHNSON
Vehicle Role(s) VICTIM'S VEHICLE

Model Year	[REDACTED]	Type	TRUCK
Make	[REDACTED]	Model	
Primary Color	[REDACTED]	Secondary/Interior Color	
Style	[REDACTED]		
Unique Char	[REDACTED]		

License Plate	[REDACTED]	Plate Type	
License Year	2019	# Plates Missing	
License State	MISSOURI	VIN	[REDACTED]

Tow Company [REDACTED] Tow Company Phone # [REDACTED]
☐ Owner Notified Notifier DSN [REDACTED]

Additional Info

NARRATIVE

In reference to report #17-6035, wherein an aircraft crashed in the parking lot of 110 Long Road, I wish to add the following:

I contacted witness Renee Johnson on scene. Johnson stated she had parked her vehicle to pump fuel at pump #8. She went inside to pay and then exited the building and re-approached her vehicle. She stated she was struck by a piece of the canopy that the aircraft had hit. The piece of canopy struck Johnson causing her to fall to the ground. She recalls feeling the heat from the aircraft being on fire. Johnson did not observe the impact; Johnson believes the impact occurred while she was on the ground. Johnson further stated that she never heard the noise that she would associate with an aircraft's engine prior to the crash.

Johnson reported that her neck was sore. Monarch ambulance [REDACTED] was on scene. Johnson declined treatment or transportation by EMS.

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Johnson directed my attention to her vehicle. I observed that her vehicle had been struck by the fallen canopy. The fire department was still working in the area at the time; I was unable to get close enough to inspect the damage to her vehicle. Refer to vehicle screen for further. Johnson was able to later drive her vehicle from the scene.

Nothing further.

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ADDITIONAL PARTY #1 INFORMATION**Person Role(s)** WITNESS

Last Name	UNDERWOOD	Middle Name	FOBES
First Name	SARAH	Suffix Name	
SSN		Ethnicity	NOT OF HISPANIC ORIGIN
License Number		License State	MISSOURI
Race	WHITE	Sex	FEMALE
DOB		Age	46
Resident Status	RESIDENT		

Additional Info

Street Address	CHESTERFIELD, MISSOURI, 63005
Apt/Suite/Rm #	Location Desc

Area Code	Contact Name
Phone #	Ext.

Area Code	Contact Name
Phone #	Ext.

Email Address**ADDITIONAL PARTY #2 INFORMATION****Person Role(s)** WITNESS

Last Name	BUCHMILLER	Middle Name	D
First Name	DENNIS	Suffix Name	
SSN		Ethnicity	
License Number		License State	MISSOURI
Race	WHITE	Sex	MALE
DOB		Age	76
Resident Status	RESIDENT		

Additional Info

Employer	Occupation	MAINTENANCE
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Street Address	CHESTERFIELD, MISSOURI, 63017
Apt/Suite/Rm #	Location Desc

Street Address	CHESTERFIELD, MISSOURI, 63005
Apt/Suite/Rm #	Location Desc

Area Code	Contact Name
Phone #	Ext.

Email Address**NARRATIVE**

On 12-6-2017 at approximately 2100 hrs. I contacted witness Sarah Underwood by phone who related the following: At around 1500 hrs. while she was driving westbound on Edison Rd. near the Family Church (17458 Chesterfield Airport Rd.) she observed a plane flying westbound. She said she travels the route often and enjoys watching the planes land so she was familiar with the flight path so it struck her odd that the plane was not following the normal flight path. As the plane was flying to the right of the normal path she observed the left wing tip go up then down followed by the right wing tip go up then down. The plane then

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immediately dropped quickly behind some buildings and she lost sight of the plane. She immediately traveled to Long Rd. and made a right heading northbound on Long Rd. towards Chesterfield Airport Rd. She found the plane on the ground in the parking lot of the BP gas station. She stopped her vehicle on the roadway in front of the plane and saw flames inside the cabin of the plane with someone moving inside. Approximately twelve people were around the cabin trying to free the person inside. She overheard one of the men say "Don't worry buddy, we are going to get you out." She then realized that the flames were near the gas station with a fuel tanker truck nearby and decided that was not the best place to be so she left and contacted a nearby police officer.

I also contacted witness Dennis Buchmiller by phone who related the following: He was outside the back door of his home and saw a plane overhead traveling west towards the airport. What made him notice the plane was the fact that the plane engine was making a strange noise. He said it went from normal to a growl and then eventually went silent near the area of the Wal-Mart. The flight path was out of the ordinary as well being that it went to the right and then the left and back towards the right. He went inside and saw on the news about a plane crash in Chesterfield and called Chesterfield Police Department.

Nothing further.

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ADDITIONAL PARTY #1 INFORMATIONPerson Role(s) **WITNESS**

[REDACTED]
Last Name **FOX** Middle Name **B**
First Name **RICHARD** Suffix Name
SSN [REDACTED] Ethnicity
License Number License State
Race **WHITE** Sex **MALE**
DOB [REDACTED] Age **55**
Resident Status **NON-RESIDENT**

Additional Info

Street Address [REDACTED] **ST LOUIS, MISSOURI, 63005**

Apt/Suite/Rm # Location Desc

[REDACTED]
Area Code [REDACTED] Contact Name
Phone # [REDACTED] Ext.

[REDACTED]
Area Code [REDACTED] Contact Name
Phone # [REDACTED] Ext.

Email Address

ADDITIONAL PARTY #2 INFORMATIONPerson Role(s) **WITNESS**

[REDACTED]
Last Name **BRANT** Middle Name
First Name **ROGER** Suffix Name
SSN [REDACTED] Ethnicity
License Number License State
Race **WHITE** Sex **MALE**
DOB [REDACTED] Age
Resident Status **NON-RESIDENT**

Additional Info

Employer [REDACTED] Occupation **TRUCK DRIVER**

[REDACTED]
Area Code [REDACTED] Contact Name
Phone # [REDACTED] Ext.

Email Address

NARRATIVE

In reference to the original report, I would like to add the following information:

I responded to the scene of an aircraft crash to locate possible witnesses to the crash. I spoke to Richard Fox who said he was driving westbound on Chesterfield Airport Rd. and was almost parallel with the airplane. He noticed it dipped to the right and was flying unusually low. He lost sight of it just before he got to the intersection of Long Rd. When he got to the intersection, he noticed the airplane was engulfed in flames on the ground.

I also spoke to Roger Brant who was the truck driver of the tanker truck delivering gas. Brant said he had his back to where the plane was coming while he was delivering gas to the station. He said he heard the plane and turned around to see it crash into the canopy before

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striking the ground and bursting into flames. He said he grabbed the fire extinguisher and handed it someone so he could turn off the fuel he was putting in the holding tanks.

Nothing further.

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Email Address

ADDITIONAL PARTY #4 INFORMATION

Person Role(s) CONTACT PERSON

Last Name	STEWART	Middle Name	
First Name	RANDY	Suffix Name	
SSN		Ethnicity	NOT OF HISPANIC ORIGIN
License Number		License State	
Race	WHITE	Sex	MALE
DOB		Age	
Resident Status	NON-RESIDENT		

Additional Info		Occupation	DIRECTOR OF TRANSPORTATION
Employer			

Street Address	CUBA, MISSOURI, 65453
Apt/Suite/Rm #	Location Desc

Area Code	Contact Name
Phone #	Ext.

Email Address

NARRATIVE

In reference to the earlier report I wish to add the following.

On 12/6/2017 at 1455 hours, I responded to the intersection of Long Rd and Chesterfield Airport Rd for a report of an airplane crash. I exited west bound I-64 onto Long Rd and approached the crash scene from the north. On the exit ramp from the highway, I could see the plane in the grass area between the BP Gas Station (110 Long Rd) and Long Rd.

The plane was fully engulfed in flames. I could see a police vehicle parked on Long Rd just south west of the crash. There was a large crowd gathering in the area. I made a left turn onto east bound Chesterfield Airport Rd and parked my patrol vehicle in the west bound lanes of Chesterfield Airport Rd to block the road from vehicles entering the area. I ran over to the crash scene and began evacuating people and vehicles off the gas station parking lot. While doing this, I began attempting to identify witnesses.

I first made contact with Cory Gronemeyer. He stated his was driving on Chesterfield Airport Rd west bound approaching Long Rd. Gronemeyer advised just before the crash he looked over and observed the airplane.

He noted the plane seemed lower than most planes and thought it was odd. He stated the plane appeared to "rock" stating the right wing went down, up and then back down. The plane was flying more from south to north as opposed to the normal east to west. He said the plane was not flying towards the airport. His window was down and noted the plane was not making noise. Just after he made these observations he described the plane as it dropped down, hit the top of the gas station and immediately exploded as it hit the ground.

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The second witness I spoke to was James Hilderbrand. He identified himself as a pilot and stated he was at the intersection of Chesterfield Airport Rd and Long Rd when he noticed the airplane. He stated the airplane was obviously too low and slow during approach. The plane looked as it was gliding. Hilderbrand believed the propeller was not rotating but stated he was not 100% sure. He stated the plane hit the top of the canopy of the gas station and caught fire as it impacted the ground.

All other parties I spoke with were only able to describe the crash and not events before the impact.

At the crash scene was a semi-tractor trailer, refueling tanker parked near the gas pumps. The front of the semi-truck was pointing directly at the crash scene and on the front windshield was a dashcam video recording system. I made contact with the driver and requested a copy of the dash cam video. He directed me to Randy Stewart (Director of Transportation). He advised they would attempt to download the video system at their headquarters but stated if the truck was off at the time, the video would not have been recording.

I also made contact with the owner of the BP Gas Station (Cyriac Peringelil). Peringelil was notified of the damage to the canopy of the gas pumps and requested a copy of the surveillance video.

Nothing further at this time.