

Memorandum of Conversation

Date: October 19, 2017

Time: 1040 central daylight time

Conversation Including: Robert J. Gale, Pilot/Owner

Conversation Regarding: CEN18LA014, N105MK

Duration of Call: 15 Minutes



Summary & Factual Information from Conversation:

Mr. Gale reported that the accident occurred during a night cross-country flight that originated from Des Moines, Iowa. He stated that he had made a fuel stop at Bult Field Airport (C56), Monee, Illinois, before departing on the final flight leg about 1730 central daylight time. Mr. Gale reported that he had originally planned to land at Northeast Ohio Regional Airport (HZY), Ashtabula, Ohio; however, as the flight approached HZY he was unable to activate the airport's runway lights using the designated common traffic advisory frequency. He subsequently diverted to OH33 and telephoned the airport manager to have the runway lights turned on. Mr. Gale reported that he became disoriented as he orbited the airport waiting for the runway lights to be turned on, which resulted in him believing that he was on final approach to runway 1 instead of runway 19. Mr. Gale stated that during final approach he incorrectly identified a crossing road that he believed was about 3/4 mile south of runway 1 approach threshold; however, the road he observed was about 1 mile north of the airport. Mr. Gale stated that he and his passenger suddenly saw tree branches appear as the airplane descended on final approach. He immediately increased engine power and airplane pitch in attempt to avoid the trees, but the right wing impacted a tree and the airplane subsequently impacted terrain. The right wing, aft fuselage, and empennage sustained substantial damage during the impact sequence. Mr. Gale reported that he sustained a fractured vertebra during the accident, which required a back brace. He reported that his passenger was not injured. Mr. Gale reported that there were no mechanical failures or malfunctions with the airplane that would have precluded normal operation.

--- End of interview summary ---

I can attest that the above summary and factual information was taken on the above stated day, and is correct to the best of my knowledge:

Signed: _ Andrew Todd Fox _

Dated: _ 10/19/2017 _

Andrew Todd Fox

National Transportation Safety Board

Air Safety Investigator

Memorandum of Conversation

Date: November 1, 2017

Time: 0835 central daylight time

Conversation Including: Robert J. Gale, Pilot/Owner

Conversation Regarding: CEN18LA014, N105MK

Duration of Call: 5 Minutes



Summary & Factual Information from Conversation:

The purpose of the follow-up phone interview was to clarify information that Mr. Gale provided in his 6120.1 accident report concerning his night flight experience.

Mr. Gale reconfirmed that he had about 7 hours of night flight experience; however, he had not flown at night within the 90 days preceding the accident. Mr. Gale also stated that his most recent night flight was completed on February 20, 2017, during which he made a night landing on runway 1 at OH33.

--- End of interview summary ---

I can attest that the above summary and factual information was taken on the above stated day, and is correct to the best of my knowledge:

Signed: _ Andrew Todd Fox _

Dated: _ 11/01/2017 _

Andrew Todd Fox

National Transportation Safety Board

Air Safety Investigator