

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: CEN19FA005 FW: Potential Ground Witness to Small Aircraft crash in Paulding Co., GA on 10/13/18
Date: Friday, October 19, 2018 5:15:31 AM

Hi Courtney,

Hope you are doing well. This came into the witness email box. Not sure if it will be of help to you, but here you go. No need to respond to these folks unless it helps your investigation.

Take care!

Regards,

Erik

From: Chris and Chrissy Sechler [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 18, 2018 5:57 PM
To: eyewitnessreport [REDACTED] >
Subject: Potential Ground Witness to Small Aircraft crash in Paulding Co., GA on 10/13/18

To Whom it May Concern -

I believe I may be a civilian ground witness to a single-engine aviation crash that happened approximately six to seven miles from my home. I have no aviation training or any sort of "professional" aviation knowledge or experience, but I believe what I saw may be relevant to any investigation that may be ongoing. I'll describe the details to the best of my abilities, and I'm happy to answer questions you have.

On the afternoon of Saturday, October 13, 2018, I was outside the front of my home when a small plane flew overhead. If I had to guess, I'd say this occurred between 3 and 4PM; I don't recall the time precisely, but I do recall that it was mid-late afternoon.

To provide a bit of context, there is typically a large volume of air traffic near my neighborhood and all variety of aircraft frequently fly overhead; small planes, commercial jets, and military aircraft are all very normal sights and sounds around here.

What caught my attention about this particular plane as it passed overhead, flying in approximately a north/north-west direction, was that all of a sudden the engine noise just stopped. I observed the aircraft and immediately noticed that it had a bright, light blue stripe down the side. I did not observe any activity that appeared otherwise "suspicious," despite the engine having stopped, or been stopped; the plane appeared to be gliding; did not appear to be losing altitude at a rapid pace; did not appear to be any type of descent; and the wings appeared to remain level; I did not hear the engine sputter before or after it cut off. After a pause of approximately 7 seconds, the engine noise resumed (again, I did not hear any type of sputter), and the airplane appeared to be flying off normally along the same north/north-west trajectory. A small jet plane flew over as the small single-engine plane was getting to be out of my sight behind the tree line; the jet appeared to be flying almost perpendicularly, traveling approximately west, and flew over the path of the small

plane, seemingly in closer proximity/airspace to the single-engine plane than I'm used to seeing around here; I assumed it may have been summoned by Air Traffic Control to observe the behavior of the smaller plane.

This kind of behavior did not originally alert or prompt me to make any type of official report because the air traffic over this area is simply not just heavy; sometimes the planes maneuver in rather interesting fashion - from the ground, I've always assumed for practice or training or whatever. Some of the maneuvering I've witnessed over the past several years, especially from the smaller aircraft, has been so curious (at least from my perspective) that the activity I witnessed on the 13th honestly didn't seem like cause for alarm. The plane/pilot simply seemed to be practicing some kind of maneuver. The concern that I initially experienced when I noticed the engine stop dissipated as I watched the plane navigate smoothly; it abated nearly entirely when I heard the engine come back on, and I surmised that the pilot had intentionally controlled this aircraft to do this - based on my observations on the ground, at that time I believed he was in capable control of his aircraft. I watched the single-engine plane until it was completely out of my sight and listened off into the distance for a while as best I could and did not observe anything that led me to believe anything was out-of-the-ordinary, so at that point I figured I'd just seen some sort of fancy training for recovering from stalling or something.

What has re-prompted my concern and motivated me to email this information to the NTSB is that I have since read that a plane that matches the physical description of the plane that I saw flying overhead with its engine stopped had crashed approximately six to seven miles to my northwest near the Paulding County and Bartow County lines in GA, at approximately the same time in the afternoon, killing the pilot. Although I cannot remember the exact time I witnessed the plane fly overhead, I read that the plane went down in the mid-late afternoon time. When I saw a photo of the wreckage of the airplane, it immediately triggered the memory of the plane with the bright blue stripe that flew overhead that afternoon, its engine suddenly silent as it passed overhead. Although at the time the aircraft did not appear to be in distress from my position on the ground, I now believe that this may have very well likely been the same aircraft that later crashed just a handful of miles away, and I now realize when I heard the engine stop on the aircraft that was flying overhead, that the aircraft and pilot were probably in much more trouble, and in much more danger, than it initially appeared from my position on the ground. The location that the article described where the plane went down is about six to seven miles to the northwest of my home, which matches the direction I saw the plane fly overhead as its engine cut off. The approximate timing, the physical description of the plane, and the direction of travel all match, along with my observations of the behavior of the plane itself; I realize it could all be by coincidence, but I wanted to share this information and my observations with you as I read in the article that NTSB is conducting an investigation, and I'm hoping that this information is relevant and helps answer some of the questions your investigators are asking as well as the questions the pilot's family may have. I suppose my reasoning is that even if I've noticed something merely coincidental, that based on the information I have, you guys are the professionals, the investigators, and the people who understand aviation; that the best I can do is report my civilian observations from the ground to you guys, the NTSB, to make official determinations about its relevancy, and whatever insight it may provide; and that it's better to have too much information, versus not having enough details, to answer the questions you and the pilot's family have.

I communicate most efficiently via email, but I am also available by telephone at [REDACTED]. If I am unavailable to answer, I politely request you leave me a voicemail with call-back number and name and I will get back to you as soon as possible.

I send my best to the family of the pilot and to your investigators as they work hard to find answers. My family and I greatly appreciate what the NTSB does to help keep people safer every day.

Sincerely,
Chrissy Sechler