



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Timothy N. Sorensen
Aviation Accident Investigator
Central Region

Date: February 21, 2019
Person Contacted: Galen Bartels
NTSB Accident Number: CEN19LA051 – Beaver Island, Michigan

Narrative:

Mr. Bartels reported that he has lived across the street from the airport for most of his life, and he is familiar with aircraft operating into and out of the airport. He is not able to see the airport itself from his property.

Mr. Bartels stated that about 7:00pm he thought he heard a helicopter at the airport. He went outside and then realized that it was an airplane. The airplane seemed to be sitting with the engines idling for about 10 or 15 minutes. At that point, the sound of the engines increased dramatically; "it was very loud." He was downwind from the airport which might have made the sound slightly louder than it otherwise would have been. The airplane sounded as if it turned to the right (north) after departing. Shortly afterward, the sound changed to a lower pitch similar to when a pilot adjusts the pitch of the propellers; then it went silent. He did not hear the impact.

Mr. Bartels recalled that there was a southwest wind about 12 knots at the time of the accident. He did not recall any precipitation and was unsure of the sky condition at the time.

----- End of entries -----



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Date: February 21, 2019
Person Contacted: Amy Burris
NTSB Accident Number: CEN19LA051 – Beaver Island, Michigan

Narrative:

Ms. Burris reported that she was at her son's house which was across the street from the airport when she heard the airplane. She noted that it was "real loud" and described it as a "whomp, whomp" kind of sound. Initially, she thought that it was a helicopter but later realized it was an airplane. A few minutes later, on her way home, she passed the airport and pulled in briefly. She saw the airplane going down the runway to the west. Nothing seemed unusual about the airplane during that brief time she saw it. She then left the airport to go home and didn't think anything more about it until she heard about the accident.

Ms. Burris recalled the weather as clear, calm and "very dark." There was no precipitation at the time.

----- End of entries -----



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Central Region

Date: February 26, 2019
Person Contacted: Keith Gibbs
NTSB Accident Number: CEN19LA051 – Beaver Island, Michigan

Narrative:

Mr. Gibbs was about two miles northeast of the Beaver Island Airport when he heard the airplane. He heard the “distinct sound” of a twin-engine airplane. He added that it was “plenty loud” and that the engines didn’t seem to be having any difficulties. Shortly afterward, the sound of the engines abruptly “went quiet,” after which he heard the airplane impacting the trees. He responded to the accident site; however, there were already people on-scene.

----- End of entries -----



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Central Region

Date: January 29, 2019
Person Contacted: Neal Boyle
NTSB Accident Number: CEN19LA051 – Beaver Island, Michigan

Narrative:

Mr. Boyle is a member of the volunteer fire department and responded to the scene on the night of the accident. He is also the director of maintenance at Island Airways and assisted in the recovery of the wreckage.

Mr. Boyle noted that the pilot had a summer home on Beaver Island and was known to the pilot community. The pilot's primary residence was in the Charlotte area and the airplane was based there. To Mr. Boyle's knowledge, the pilot was thought to be current and proficient, and he was not aware of any pre-existing mechanical issues with the airplane. Island Airways did not maintain the airplane.

Mr. Boyle reported that the airplane was located about 10:00pm with the assistance of the Coast Guard and the airplane ELT. The accident site was in a wooded area about one-quarter mile north of the departure end of runway 27. The debris path was oriented on a 075° heading and was about 250 feet long. The initial debris was the right-wing tip, which had separated and was suspended in a tree. The right fuel bladder was in a nearby tree along the debris path.

Mr. Boyle recalled the weather as a dark night with high overcast clouds and 10+ miles visibility.

----- End of entries -----