

National Transportation Safety Board

Office of Research and Engineering

Washington, DC 20594



CEN20LA197

MEDICAL

Specialist's Factual Report

February 28, 2023

A. ACCIDENT

Location: Cambridge, Ohio
Date: May 27, 2022
Time: 14:58 Local
Airplane: Beech 35-A33; N123JB

B. MEDICAL SPECIALIST

Specialist Michelle Watters, MD, PhD, MPH
National Transportation Safety Board, RE-1
Washington, DC

C. DETAILS OF THE INVESTIGATION

Purpose

This investigation was performed to evaluate the pilot for medical conditions, the use of medications/illicit drugs, and the presence of toxins.

Methods

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) medical case review and the pilot's autopsy and FAA Forensic Sciences Laboratory toxicology reports¹ were reviewed. Other relevant medical and regulatory issues were reviewed.

D. FACTUAL INFORMATION - PILOT

1.0 FAA Medical Case Review

According to the FAA medical case review, at the time of the accident, the 54-year-old male pilot held a third class medical certificate with the limitation that he must wear corrective lenses for near and distant vision. At his most recent FAA medical examination on 8/5/19, the pilot reported 568 total flight hours. He was 72 inches tall and weighed 175 pounds. He reported taking no medications and having no medical conditions.

2.0 Autopsy

According to the autopsy report from the Franklin County Forensic Science Center, Office of the Coroner, Columbus, Ohio, the pilot's cause of death was blunt

¹ The FAA Forensic Sciences Laboratory has the capability to test for more than 1,000 substances including toxins, common prescription and over-the-counter medications, and illicit drugs. <https://jag.cami.jccbi.gov/toxicology/>

force injuries of the head, and the manner of death was accident. No significant natural disease was identified by the forensic pathologist.

3.0 Toxicology

Toxicology testing performed by the coroner's office was negative for tested-for drugs of abuse and ethanol in the pilot's antemortem blood; caffeine was detected in his antemortem urine. Toxicology testing performed by the FAA Forensic Sciences Laboratory identified the sedating antihistamine diphenhydramine in the pilot's urine but not in his blood. The gastric reflux medication famotidine was detected in his urine and in his muscle tissue and the asthma medication albuterol was detected in his lung tissue; these two medications are generally considered non-impairing.²

E. SUMMARY OF MEDICAL FACTS

The 54-year-old male pilot held a third class medical certificate with the limitation that he must wear corrective lenses for near and distant vision. At his most recent FAA medical examination on 8/5/19, he reported taking no medications and having no medical conditions. According to the autopsy report, the pilot's cause of death was blunt force injuries of the head, and the manner of death was accident. No significant natural disease was identified. Toxicology testing detected diphenhydramine in the pilot's urine but not in his blood. Famotidine was detected in his urine and in his muscle tissue and albuterol was detected in his lung tissue; these two medications are non-impairing.

Submitted by:

Michelle Watters, MD, PhD, MPH
Medical Officer, RE-1

² FAA. Updated 1/16/19. Forensic Toxicology's WebDrugs.
Diphenhydramine. <https://jag.cami.jccbi.gov/toxicology/DrugDetail.asp?did=50>
Famotidine. <https://jag.cami.jccbi.gov/toxicology/DrugDetail.asp?did=293>
Albuterol. <https://jag.cami.jccbi.gov/toxicology/DrugDetail.asp?did=331>