



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

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Aviation Accident Investigator
Central Region

Date: January 14, 2021
Person Contacted: Marty Coaker, Airport Manager
NTSB Accident Number: CEN21LA112 – Sparta, Michigan

Narrative:

Mr. Coaker is the manager at the Paul C. Miller Airport (8D4) in Sparta, Michigan. He was not at the airport at the time of the accident; however, he did respond once he was notified of the accident.

The airplane touched down short of the runway as evidenced by tire tracks in the snow. He noted that the tracks did not penetrate completely through layer of snow. The depth of the snow was about 3 inches. The airplane struck a small snowbank off the end of the runway which consisted of snow previously cleared from the runway. The level of the snowbank was below that of the adjacent runway end identifier lights (REIL) fixtures. The airplane continued onto the runway and came to rest on the right side of the pavement at the fixed distance markings, about 900 ft from the approach end of the runway. The runway exhibited prop slashes. The right main landing gear separated and was located near the runway number painted on the pavement. The left main landing gear and collapsed and was with the airplane. The nose landing gear was not observed; he thought that it had likely collapsed into the wheel well.

The runway was equipped with edge lighting, precision approach path indicators (PAPI), and REIL. The PAPI were illuminated continuously (24/7). The runway edge and REIL lighting were pilot controlled. Normally, both were off until activated and then they remain on for 10 – 15 minutes. He could not say if the runway and REIL were on at the time of the accident since he was not at the airport. However, they were both operational on the afternoon/evening of the accident.

The airport was equipped with an automated weather observing system (AWOS) certified for visibility and altimeter setting. Any other parameters provided were reference only. The system was designated as an AWOS-AV.

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