

Timothy Sorensen
Sr. Aviation Accident Investigator
Aviation Safety - Central Region

Date: November 25, 2022
Subject: CEN23FA038 - Decatur, Texas
Contact: Andrew Dent - Witness

Mr. Dent was northbound on Highway 287, approaching the exit for Highway 81, when he observed a twin-engine airplane at a low altitude and in a "steep" descent. The lower fuselage ("belly") was visible; however, he was uncertain if it was in a steep turn or if the airplane was inverted. It appeared to be at a "weird angle of descent." He did not observe any smoke or fire from the airplane, and it appeared to be structurally intact.

The airplane was in view for "maybe" 15 seconds before it descended below the tree line. A "fireball" emerged followed by some smoke; however, the smoke was "thin" and dissipated quickly. It "didn't look like a continuous fire."

The weather was VFR with a high ceiling and light winds.

----- *end of summary* -----

Timothy Sorensen
Sr. Aviation Accident Investigator
Aviation Safety - Central Region

Date: November 25, 2022
Subject: CEN23FA038 - Decatur, Texas
Contact: Capt. Cliff Oates, Decatur Fire Dept.

Capt. Oates was leaving Kemp's Wrecker Service, about 1/2-mile east of the accident site, when he observed the airplane at a low altitude. It was oriented straight toward him, and in a slow, descending turn toward the north. The airplane appeared to be structurally intact with the landing gear retracted. The flight path was steady and the wings "never dipped." Shortly after the airplane descended out of sight, he observed an explosion.

He responded to the accident site. Both engines were on fire when he arrived, and there was a fuel leak from the right engine toward the cockpit area. He used a fire extinguisher to keep the fire off the fuselage until the fire crews arrived.

Weather conditions were partly cloudy with some sun starting to come out, and no rain. The visibility was "fine."

----- end of summary -----