

CEN23LA244 (N290LA, Air Tractor AT-502A) – Pilot (Joe Baker) Additional Questions (06/24/2023)

1. What flight of the day did the accident flight occur on? **second**
2. How many pounds of chemical were onboard when you departed for the accident flight? **About 3500 lbs**
3. How many pounds of fuel were on onboard when you departed for the accident flight?
About 660 lbs
4. What type of chemical was onboard when you departed for the accident flight? **crop oil, and dimelin**
5. What type of crops were you planning to apply the chemical to during the accident flight?
Pasture
6. I understand that you decided to return to the departure airport shortly after taking off due to the chemical dispensing system not working properly. What was the issue with the chemical dispensing system? About how long after taking off, did you notice the chemical dispensing system was not working properly? **I was not dispensing the correct rate, 25 minutes as soon as I arrived at the field.**
7. What runway at the airport did you utilize during the accident landing? What was the estimated wind direction and speed at the time? **Runway 11, south 15 -20mph**
8. Is this airplane equipped with a tailwheel lock? If so, was the tailwheel locked before the landing? **Yes,yes**
9. I understand the approach speed for the landing was about 125 mph. Were the flaps up or down during the approach? If the flaps were extended, was there any full rudder side slip occurring?
Half flap, no
10. On what portion of the runway did you touch down on (for example, such as the center of the first third of the runway? Was the runway dry or wet when you touched down?
First quarter, dry
11. When was the last time you performed a landing with a full load of chemical in an Air Tractor AT-502A? **2 years prior**
12. How many years have you flown 14 *Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)* Part 137 aerial application flights for? About many hours total do you have flying 14 *CFR* Part 137 aerial application flights?
10 years, 1600

13. Do you have any prior experience training in an Air Tractor AT-502 (or other aerial application airplane) flight simulator or other training device? turbine engine transition training 5 years ago
14. Do you have experience flying in other aerial application airplanes? If so, what are the makes and models of the airplanes, and about how much total flight time do you have in each one?
Pa 25 450 hours, AT 401 425hours
15. On the day of the accident flight, what time did you start your duty day? Did you feel fatigued prior to the accident occurring? 11AM , no
16. Are you a member of the National Agricultural Aviation Association (NAAA) or the South Dakota Aviation Association (SDAA)? If so, do you regularly attend any training or safety seminars (either with the NAAA or the SDAA, or both)? SDAA, tri state aerial convention for the pass 10 years



Michael J. Hodges
Investigator-In-Charge
Office of Aviation Safety, Central Regional Office

Date: 07/06/2023

Subject: CEN23LA244

Contact: Preston Johnson (Owner and operator of Ascend Ag. Inc. in Wall, South Dakota)

There were no preimpact mechanical malfunctions or failures with the airframe or the engine that would have precluded normal operation. The only mechanical issue was with the chemical dispersal system. The system was not dispersing at the correct rate during the accident flight.

A postaccident examination of the system by the operator found it contained foreign object debris (FOD) in the flow controller (1 inch line size), manufactured by Turbines, Inc. The FOD appeared to be a small piece of clear material, like plastic. This piece of FOD likely blocked the flow of the chemical during the accident flight.

It was undetermined where the FOD originated from or how long it had been in the system for.

Nothing Follows

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: CEN23LA244 (N290LA, Air Tractor AT-502A) - Accident Date and Time Question
Date: Monday, July 10, 2023 12:05:19 PM

[CAUTION] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click any links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

You are correct he has the date wrong, time might be close to accident time, vs the initial reported time of 1600

Thanks Preston J
Ascend Ag Inc

Sent from my Galaxy

----- Original message -----

From: Hodges Michael [REDACTED]
Date: 7/7/23 4:23 PM (GMT-07:00)
To: Preston Johnson- PERSONAL [REDACTED], Preston J [REDACTED],
[REDACTED]
Subject: CEN23LA244 (N290LA, Air Tractor AT-502A) - Accident Date and Time Question

Hi Preston,

Hope you are doing well sir.

For the accident with N290LA (Air Tractor AT-502A), it was initially reported to the FAA and the NTSB, as occurring on Sunday, June 18, 2023, about 1600 mountain daylight time.

On the NTSB Form 6120.1 that was submitted to me, Joe Baker (the accident pilot) reported that the accident occurred on Monday, June 19, 2023, about 1330 mountain daylight time.

Can you please confirm the correct accident date and time?

I just want to make sure I have my report correct. Thank you sir.

Mike

Mike J. Hodges, MS

Aviation Accident Investigator, Central Region

National Transportation Safety Board

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Response Operations Center (24/7): 1-844-373-9922

Work Hours: Monday-Friday, 0900-1730 Central Time

“Don’t let yesterday use up too much of today.” – Will Rogers

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