



RECORD OF MEETING

Dr. David Bowling
Regional Chief/Senior Air Safety Investigator
Office of Aviation Safety, Central Region

Record of Meeting with members from the Transportation Safety Board of Canada and Dakota Lowe, Air Tractor, Inc.

May 7, 2025, at 8:00 MDT

NTSB Accident Number: CEN25LA164

Accident Summary:

On April 29, 2025, about 0840 am eastern daylight time, a float-equipped Air Tractor, Inc. AT-802A, N4025K, was destroyed when it was involved in an accident in the Atlantic Ocean 130 nautical miles east-southeast of St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada. The airplane is missing, and the pilot is presumed deceased. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 ferry flight. An international instrument flight plan was on file.

The flight originated at St. John's International Airport and was en route to Santa Maria/Azores, Portugal. Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast (ADS-B) information showed the airplane climb to approximately 6,500 ft msl and proceed on an east-southeasterly heading. About 0840 the airplane lost contact with air traffic control and disappeared from radar. An emergency locator transmitter activated shortly afterward.

The Joint Rescue Coordination Center at Halifax, Nova Scotia, sent air and sea assets to the airplane's last known location to locate the airplane and rescue the pilot. On arrival at the scene, one of the two floats was found on the ocean surface along with a backpack and a seat cushion. Oil was also observed on the surface. The search for the pilot continued until the evening of April 30, 2025.

Members in Attendance:

Dr. David Bowling
Investigator in Charge
National Transportation Safety Board

Office of Aviation Safety, Central Region
Aurora, Colorado, USA

Austin Adams

Regional Senior Investigator
Operations/Air Investigations – Atlantic
Transportation Safety Board of Canada
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

Dakota Lowe

Aviation Safety Investigator
Air Tractor, Inc.
Olney, Texas, USA

Murray Hamm

Regional Senior Investigator
Operations/Air Investigations – Atlantic
Transportation Safety Board of Canada
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

Fernando Sucre

Regional Senior Investigator - Operations
Operations/Air Investigations – Atlantic/Operations
Transportation Safety Board of Canada
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

Allan Chaulk

Regional Senior Investigator
Operations/Air Investigations – Atlantic
Transportation Safety Board of Canada
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

Brandon Murdoch

Air Traffic Control Specialist
Transportation Safety Board of Canada
Ottawa, Canada

Aaron Brown

Air Traffic Control Specialist
Transportation Safety Board of Canada
Ottawa, Canada

Discussion:

This was the first meeting of all the people involved in this investigation. After we introduced ourselves, we began discussing what we have and what has been done so far.

I confirmed with Austin Adams the NTSB would take the lead on the investigation. There were no objections amongst the team members and that the TSB would provide me all the information they had.

Fernando Sucre, TSB, reported that at 1049 am they received a call from Transport Canada Operations that an Air tractor had disappeared from radar at 0830 EDT and that they were receiving an ELT signal. The Joint Rescue Coordination Center (JRCC) initiated a search for the airplane. On arrival at the airplane's last known position, one of the floats was observed on the surface of the water, along with a black backpack and a seat cushion. There was also an oil slick on the surface of the water. The float and cushion were recovered and taken to a Coast Guard facility in St. John's and placed in secure storage. The backpack, which contains the pilot's airman certificate, passport, pilot and aircraft logbooks, some personal medications, and an iPad cover, were turned over to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) in St. John's, where it is secured. An examination of the float showed no hydrodynamic damage meaning that he was under some control and might have initially put down on the water. The JRCC continued their search for the remainder of April 29 and returned to continue the search on April 30, 2025. The search was suspended on the evening of April 30.

Pilot Information

The pilot's name is Jose Luis Dominguez-Otero. It is possible that the RCMP has already reached out to his family. I will receive copies of and photos of all his information.

Airplane/Owner/Sale of the Airplane Information

Dakota Lowe, Air Tractor, reported that the airplane was newly manufactured and licensed on February 10, 2025. On February 19 and 20, the airplane was flown to Wichita Falls, Texas, and then to St. Paul, Minnesota where the floats were installed by a company called Wipaire. On April 25, the airplane was flown to Bangor, Maine. The following day, April 30, the airplane was flown to St. John's Newfoundland. During the April 26 flight, Mr. Lowe received a report that the generator control unit (GCU) had failed. A Wipaire Tech, Martin Holte, traveled to St. John's to resolve the GCU issue. Mr. Lowe also reported that when the baggage compartment was opened after that flight, rain and ice were found inside.

On April 29, 2025, the airplane departed St. John's with the intended destination of Santa Maria Airport, Portugal. Mr. Lowe reported that he received a report that the pilot activated his in-reach SOS device and 50 minutes later, the ELT signal from the airplane was received.

The owner of the airplane was SAAMA Aviation Spa, Talca, Chile'. They do agricultural operations in Chile' and Portugal.

A company, AgSur, Aviones headquartered in Pergamino, Argentina, sold the airplane on behalf of Air Tractor. They have a U. S. Contact John Mishler.

ADS-B Information

Brandon Murdoch, TSB-ATC, and Aaron Brown, TSB-ATC, came on and showed their preliminary graphic data and track data. The data showed the airplane was cruising on average 130 knots at an altitude between 6,000 and 7,000 feet. At the end of the data, the airplane entered a 2,000 ft/minute descent. The airspeed fluctuated until the airplane came close to the water and then stabilized about 65 kts prior to touching down.

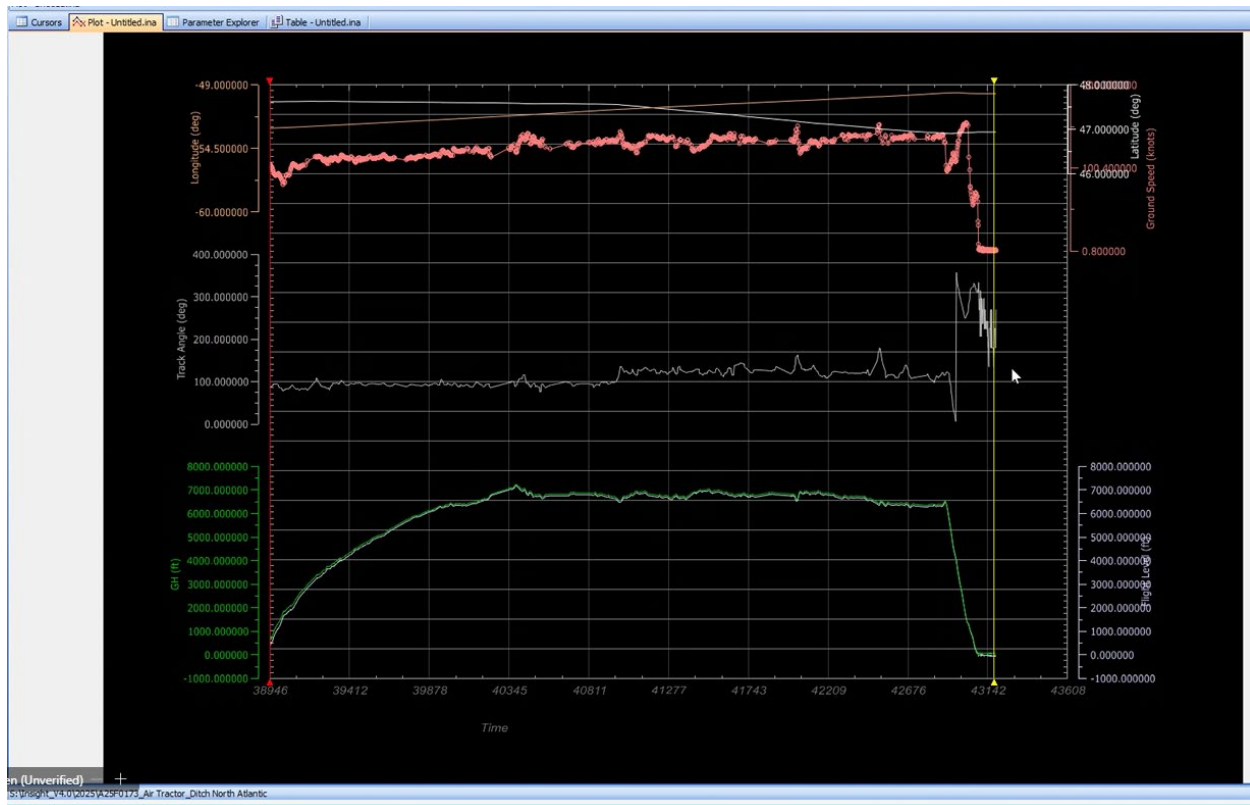


Figure 1. Graphic Depiction of ADS-B

Just prior to touchdown, the airplane made a 180-degree turn toward the north-northwest. Once on the water, the airplane continued to transmit ADS-B data for another 104 seconds. The ELT signal was plotted being 4.5 NM east-northeast from the final ADS-B point.

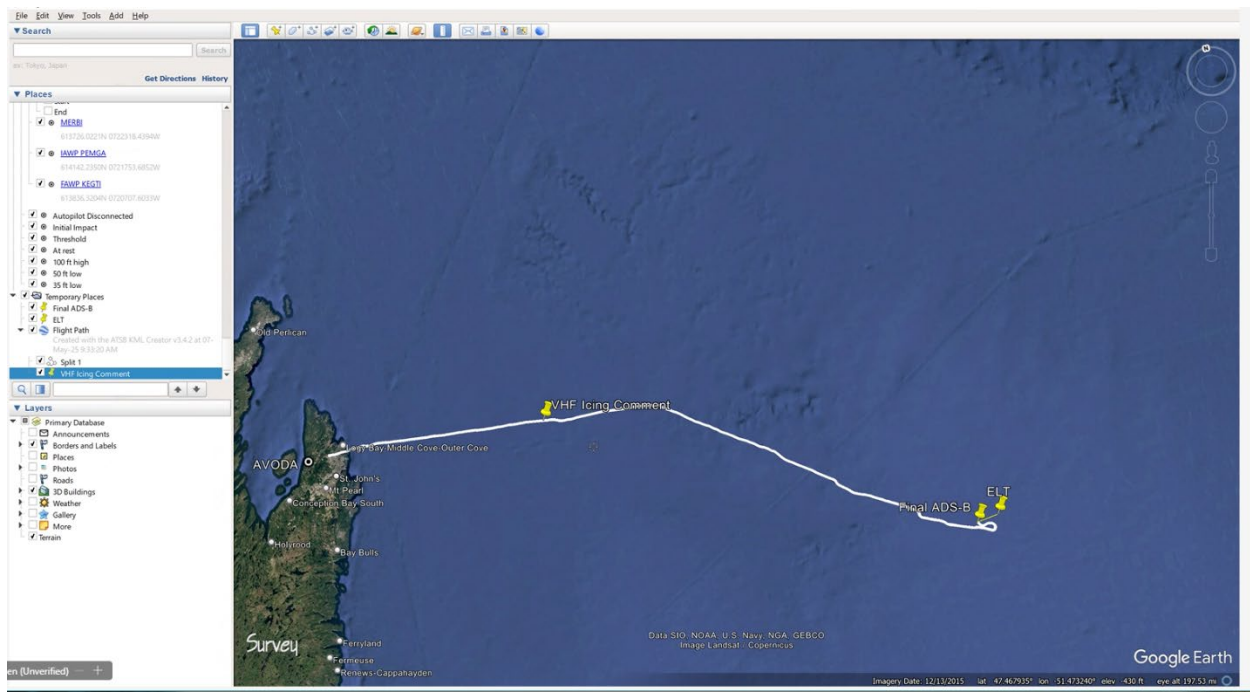


Figure 2. Flight Path Depiction derived from ADS-B Data

Communications

At 1112 UTC there was a radio call from the pilot to Gander ARTC that he needed to climb for icing. The airplane was given clearance to climb and maintain 7,000 ft. ADS-B data confirmed he made the climb and remained there until he began the 2,000 ft/min. descent.

There may be other communication. The data they provided was very preliminary.

Weather Conditions

A PIREP provided by the pilot of a Beech King Air belonging to the Canadian Department of Fisheries, when sent to help find the airplane was visibility 2 miles, with a 400 to 500 ft. overcast ceiling. According to search and rescue aircraft, the weather got worse throughout the day. Also, the sea surface was rough.

David Bowling