



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Ralph E. Hicks
Senior Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

Date: April 23, 2011
Person Contacted: Thomas Lee Neal Jr.
NTSB Accident Number: ERA11FA258 – Altavista, VA

Narrative:

Mr. Neal was interviewed by the investigation team at the gated entry to the access road leading to the accident site (at English Park). The IIC led the interview. The following is a summary of the interview.

Mr. Neal was at the Fox Pen in Hurt, about 9:30 to 9:45 pm. He stated that planes go over that area all the time. He observed an airplane very low, so low that you could see the lights on the bottom of the airplane. The airplane porpoised up and down, about 4 times. He went away, then came back a few seconds later, not porpoising this time. The airplane was very low, just above the trees. He saw the airplane disappear behind the trees and knew something was wrong.

It was raining at the time, and foggy. When asked how high the airplane was, he responded “lower than he should have been.”

When asked to describe the engine noise, he heard the engine sound increase as the airplane entered a dive, then decrease as he went back up. The second time he saw the airplane, the engine noise was “steady.”

He did not hear the airplane crash.