



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Allison Diaz
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: June 12, 2012
NTSB Accident Number: ERA12LA386
Statement from Inspector Rick Hoy, FAA Atlanta FSDO

Inspector Hoy provided the following information regarding his response to the accident on June 8, 2012, involving N1481, an experimental Dogbee Gyroplane:

I received a call from the ROC at 1705 on Friday June 8, 2012, stating there was a gyroplane accident with one known fatality about a mile north of the Wrens airport in Jefferson County, Georgia. On the way to the location I spoke with the Jefferson City Response Team and agreed to allow them to lift the aircraft and remove the body provided they took enough pictures to document the aircraft's position.

I arrived on the scene at 1915 and the aircraft was at the edge of a cotton field about 20 feet from the edge of the woods. I took pictures of what was left of the aircraft. Most of the gyroplane's structure was consumed in the post impact fire. The upper rotor was hanging in a pine tree about ten feet from the remains of the aircraft and showed signs of rotation at impact. The engine and forward driving prop were burnt but somewhat intact. Two of the three blades on the prop showed no signs of rotation at impact. The third blade was broken at ground level and also showed no signs of rotation. The throttle was at the aft stop. I finished the on-scene investigation and went to the airport to interview witnesses.

A witness on the road adjacent to the cotton field stated that both aircraft approached the field after passing over a large set of power lines and descended to a lower altitude. After traveling about 200 to 300 yards the lead aircraft (accident aircraft) was approaching another smaller set of power lines (approximately 40 feet tall) at the same level as the aircraft. The pilot put the aircraft into a sharp 180 degree left hand turn and began losing altitude. The aircraft impacted the ground and caught on fire. This witness ran over to the aircraft but could not get the unconscious pilot out of the seat belt because of the fire. This witness stated that he thought the forward driving prop was turning as the aircraft passed by his location prior to impact.

I returned to the crash site and along with the fire department we loaded the remains of the aircraft onto a trailer. The fire department stored the aircraft in a locked maintenance building.

On Monday June 11, 2012, I returned to the fire station and began piecing the aircraft together. I could only find two of the four upper rotor control rods. They both showed signs of failure at impact. The remaining two control rods were apparently consumed in the fire. I removed the four spark plugs which showed normal burn indication. I removed the prop spinner and the gears were well lubricated and looked normal. The crank shaft would turn and the pistons moved.

On July 11, 2012, I again returned to the fire station along with a certified gyroplane flight instructor, who was familiar with this particular aircraft. We went over the aircraft and he could not find any signs of a failure prior to impact on what remained of the aircraft. He did state that the trim was set correctly.