



Virginia State Police



WITNESS INFORMATION AND STATEMENT

Name: DEAN RUSSELL Phone#: [REDACTED]
Date of Birth: [REDACTED] Age: 74 Drivers License # or SSN: [REDACTED]
Address: [REDACTED] LN. DELTAVILLE Zip Code: 23043
Place of Employment: RETIRED Work Phone: [REDACTED]
Alternate Contact: [REDACTED] Alt. Phone: [REDACTED]
Time the Accident/Incident occurred: 1:30 PM Were you wearing a seatbelt: N/A
Did the Air Bags Deploy? N/A How fast were you traveling at? N/A MPH
What Car were you driving (Make/Model): [REDACTED]
Which lane were you driving in: [REDACTED]
Insurance Information: [REDACTED]

Statement:

(ON REGENT RD)
STANDING IN MY FRIEND PETER'S FRONT YARD, I OBSERVED AN ULTR-LITE PLANE FLYING PARALLEL TO REGENT RD. TRAVELING TOWARD HARTFIELD. I ESTIMATE HIS ALTITUDE TO BE ABOUT 2,000-1500 FT. AS HE FLEW PAST, I HEARD A LOUD CRACKING SOUND. HIS LEFT WING LIFTED FROM ITS MOUNT ON THE FUSELAGE, THE ENGINE REVED UP, & THE PLANE IMMEDIATELY WENT INTO A NOSE DIVE. THE LEFT WING WAS FLAPPING WILDLY. THE RIGHT WING WAS STILL ATTACHED TO THE FUSELAGE AS NORMAL. THE PLANE SPIRALED NOSE DOWN (STRAIGHT DOWN) INTO THE WOODS. I HEARD IT HIT THE GROUND. I THEN CALLED 911. MY FRIEND PETER & I WENT SEARCHING. WE WERE SOME OF THE FIRST PERSONS TO LOCATE THE PLANE.

TODAY, I SAW A MAN DIE A TERRIFYING DEATH.

Signature: [REDACTED]

Date: 1-14-15

Statement taken by: ME

Time: 3:38

Date: 1-14-15



Virginia State Police

WITNESS INFORMATION AND STATEMENT

Name: Joseph Cobelli Sr & III Phone#: [REDACTED]
Date of Birth: [REDACTED] Age: 27 Drivers License # or SSN: [REDACTED]
Address: [REDACTED] Zip Code: 23169
Place of Employment: [REDACTED] Work Phone: [REDACTED]
Alternate Contact: [REDACTED] Alt. Phone: [REDACTED]
Time the Accident/Incident occurred: 1:30 Were you wearing a seatbelt: no
Did the Air Bags Deploy? [REDACTED] How fast were you traveling at? [REDACTED] MPH
What Car were you driving (Make/Model): [REDACTED]
Which lane were you driving in: [REDACTED]
Insurance Information: [REDACTED]

Statement:

Airplane flew over property, immediately after plane was out of sight I heard a pop, followed by an increase in throttle, followed by a loud bang.

Signature [REDACTED]

Date: 1-14-16

Statement taken by: [REDACTED] Time: [REDACTED] Date: [REDACTED]



Virginia State Police

WITNESS INFORMATION AND STATEMENT

Name: PETER BUNLS Phone#: [REDACTED]
Date of Birth: [REDACTED] Age: 57 Drivers License # or SSN: [REDACTED]
Address: [REDACTED] TORPINE Zip Code: 23169
Place of Employment: SELF EMPLOYED Work Phone: [REDACTED]
Alternate Contact: [REDACTED] Alt. Phone: [REDACTED]
Time the Accident/Incident occurred: 1830 Were you wearing a seatbelt: [REDACTED]
Did the Air Bags Deploy? [REDACTED] How fast were you traveling at? [REDACTED] MPH [REDACTED]
What Car were you driving (Make/Model): [REDACTED]
Which lane were you driving in: [REDACTED]
Insurance Information: [REDACTED]

Statement:

I WAS STANDING IN ^{MY} ~~THE~~ YARD WORKING.
AN ULTRALIGHT FLEW BY ON THE
EAST SIDE OF REGENT ROAD. WE
COMMENTED ON IT AND THEN THERE
WAS A LOUD BANG. WHEN I LOOKED
AT THE ULTRALIGHT, THE LEFT WING
WAS BROKEN. THE ENGINE REVVED.
THE PLANE PLUMMETED TO EARTH.
I CALLED 911. WE WENT TO LOOK FOR PLANE.
TALKED TO A NEIGHBOR ABOUT WHAT DIRECTION
FROM HER HOUSE, GUESSED AT THE TRIANGU-
LATION & HEADED INTO THE WOOD ~~OFF~~
FROM REGENT RD. WE WERE ABOUT THE
4th & 5th IN THE SCENE

Signature: [REDACTED]

Date: 1-14-16

Statement taken by: [REDACTED] Time: [REDACTED] Date: [REDACTED]



Virginia State Police

WITNESS INFORMATION AND STATEMENT

1330 T.O.Z.

Name: SAM DAVIS Phone#: [REDACTED]
Date of Birth: [REDACTED] Age: 19 Drivers License # or SSN: T6
Address: [REDACTED] Zip Code: 23169
Place of Employment: The Table to go Work Phone: [REDACTED]
Alternate Contact: [REDACTED] Alt. Phone: [REDACTED]
Time the Accident/Incident occurred: [REDACTED] Were you wearing a seatbelt: [REDACTED]
Did the Air Bags Deploy? [REDACTED] How fast were you traveling at? [REDACTED] MPH
What Car were you driving (Make/Model): [REDACTED]
Which lane were you driving in: [REDACTED]
Insurance Information: [REDACTED]

Statement:

was at house and heard a plane engine, looked out window
and saw plane crash into trees. called 911 reported crash,
met EMS. in driveway, and helped him locate the crash.

Signature: [REDACTED]

Date: 1/14/16

Statement taken by: [REDACTED] Time: [REDACTED] Date: [REDACTED]



NTSB RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Adam Gerhardt
Air Safety Investigator
General Aviation Accident Investigation Division, AS-20

Date: 01/15/2016
Person Contacted: Michael Kuhnert (Certified Flight Instructor)
NTSB Accident Number: ERA16FA089

Narrative:

The following is a summary of a conversation that occurred with Mr. Kuhnert, a certified flight instructor that gave the accident pilot a flight review in the past. He also helped move the accident airplane on January 9th, 2016 at W75 – Hummel Airport, when the right main landing gear collapsed after landing.

Mr. Kuhnert stated that he helped move the accident airplane off the grass runway at W75 airport on January 9th, 2016. He observed a "rusty spot" on the right main landing gear, and also reported that the pilot in command (Gilbert "Dennis" Gregory) stated that his landing was not hard. Mr. Kuhnert stated that the pilot in command told him that he was making a slow left turn to clear the runway and during the turn the right main landing gear collapsed. Mr. Kuhnert reported that he did not see any long skid marks where the accident airplane came to rest. He also stated that the accident airplane appeared to be in "good condition."

Mr. Kuhnert also reported that he gave the accident pilot (Gilbert "Dennis" Gregory) a flight review at some point within the last two years, but could not recall the exact date. Mr. Kuhnert stated that the accident pilot was "above average." He stated that it was a normal flight review with stalls, steep turns, and two simulated engine failures, along with other tasks. The flight was conducted in Mr. Gregory's Flight Star II airplane (N82652) and Mr. Gregory sat in the right seat for the flight review. Mr. Kuhnert signed the accident pilot off for the flight review.



NTSB RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Adam Gerhardt
Air Safety Investigator
General Aviation Accident Investigation Division, AS-20

Date: 01/16/2016
Person Contacted: Chris Beuchlt (Commercial Pilot, Virginia Marine Resources)
NTSB Accident Number: ERA16FA089

Narrative:

The following is a summary of a conversation that occurred with Mr. Chris Beuchlt, a Virginia Marine Resources Officer and a commercial pilot.

Mr. Beuchlt stated that he observed the accident airplane (N82652) on January 14th, 2016 around 7:30AM local in an open hangar at Hummel Airport (W75). He reported that he walked into the hangar to observe the airplane. Mr. Beuchlt stated that he observed a yellow quart of oil container strapped to the engine. He stated, "It was a small oil container."

Mr. Beuchlt also stated that he observed the leading edge of the left wing and noticed that, "within 5 feet of the fuselage, the fabric appeared to be shrunken down and appeared to be too tight." He described the fabric in that area of the wing as "dented in" and also stated, "I thought it may split." Mr. Beuchlt stated that he did not observe the right wing. Mr. Beuchlt stated he was in the hangar for about one to two minutes.



NTSB RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Adam Gerhardt
Air Safety Investigator
General Aviation Accident Investigation Division, AS-20

Date: 01/15/2016
Person Contacted: Rick Faivre (Operation Associate – W75 (Hummel Field Airport))
NTSB Accident Number: ERA16FA089

Narrative:

The following is a summary of a conversation that occurred with an operations associate at the airport (W75 – Hummel Field Airport) the accident airplane flew to and from.

Mr. Faivre stated that on January 9th, 2016 he observed the right main landing gear "broken" on the accident airplane. He said that the airplane was stuck on the airport's grass runway for about 3 hours. Mr. Faivre observed people tow the accident airplane to a hangar.

On January 14th, the day of the accident, Mr. Faivre reported that runway 19 was in use around 2:00PM local. He stated that he never heard the call sign for the accident airplane over the common traffic advisory frequency, nor did he see the accident airplane takeoff.



MEMORANDUM OF INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Adam Gerhart
Air Safety Investigator
General Aviation Accident Investigation Division, AS-20

Date: January 15, 2016
Person Contacted: Eye Witness: Dean Russell
NTSB Accident Number: ERA16FA089

Narrative:

The eyewitness, Dean Russell was over at friend's house off Regent Point road about 1:30 pm local time.

They (Mr. Russell and friend) saw an ultralight airplane flying overhead running parallel to Regent Road and it was heading south towards Hartfield. The airplane was flying at an altitude of about 1,500 and maybe 1,000 feet east of the road.

They were marveling at the sight of the airplane and noticed it was flying normally; we watched it fly by then all the sudden, he heard a snap or a cracking sound, and saw the left-wing fold right up; it broke right off. In a matter of a second or two, it went into a dive.

The airplane went straight down. It went into a nose dive and the engine revved up very high. It took maybe 5 or 8 seconds until he hit the ground.

The left wing appeared to snap off and went upwards with a loud cracking sound. It did not depart the airplane but folded up near the fuselage followed by it spiraling down. It appeared to be a counter clockwise rotation as it spiraled down.

He described the day as calm with no wind.

He didn't see any pieces fall off. It appeared to come down together with no detached pieces that he could see.



MEMORANDUM OF INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Adam Gerhart
Air Safety Investigator
General Aviation Accident Investigation Division, AS-20

Date: January 15, 2016
Person Contacted: Witness: Richard Bubba Leigh
NTSB Accident Number: ERA16FA089

Narrative:

Dennis (Pilot) landed at Hummel Field Airport (W75) and spoke to me about how he made a good landing but as he was taxiing out of the way so the guys behind him could land, during the turn the right landing gear came off. They always land on the grass there, it was runway 19, I'm not sure. The pilot mentioned, as he turned off strong to the left to get out of the way, the right wheel snapped off. The airplane didn't go very far, it only went about three feet. It dug into the ground about three feet, so it wasn't going very fast when it happened.

We put a jack under it and rolled it into the hanger. We can see the old crack where it was rusted. It was broken in two. Dennis took it to a machine shop where they welded it. They did a good job, but the axle had a slight camber to it. It had a high spot and a low spot.

We put the wheel back on and put the bungee cords back on.

He did a preflight on it. He shoved it out of the hanger. When he was pushing the airplane, the pilot stopped for a second. I asked him "you alright?", and he said he was fine. Then they talked about grabbing a bite to eat later.

The plane was a little hard to push because of the out of round wheel axle. He mentioned that it rolls pretty good, and it shouldn't affect the flight; get it home and we'll fix the gear. He taxied to the runway and I headed home. He did not see the pilot take off.

I made good time by driving in 33 minutes and was curious why he wasn't there yet. He called him on the cell phone twice and it went to voicemail. I knew something was wrong. I had someone call 911. I took off and looked for him but could find him in all the brush.

He was a good pilot. For him to go straight in like that he figured he may have had a heart attack and fell on his stick, but then I heard some witnesses say the wing came off and he went straight in.

For that wing to fold up, it would have to be structural on the cage of the plane or the strut bolt broke. Where he went down, he should have been between 1,000 and 1,500 feet. It had to be a structural failure.

He did the preflight in the open-door hanger with good light. It was a normal walk around.