

Collegedale Police Department - Crash Incident

Date of Incident: _____

Investigating Officer: _____

Case #: _____

Do not write above this line

Person making Statement: _____

If passenger, which vehicle were you in? _____

Driver ☐

Witness ☒

Passenger ☐

Name: _____

ROBERT ETHERIDGE

Date of Birth: _____

MAR 5, 2016

Address: _____

[REDACTED]

APISON, TN 37302

Street # / Street Name

City / State / Zip

Phone: _____

[REDACTED]

Occupation: _____

RETIRED US NAVY DENTIST

Home

Business Phone: _____

[REDACTED]

Describe what happened

APPROX. 12:45 PM. - I SAW A PLANE TAKE OFF FROM THE COLLEGEDALE AIRPORT. I WAS ON OUR TAXIWAY, JUST OUTSIDE MY HANGAR IN MY CAR. I WATCHED AS THE PLANE WENT INTO A LEFT TURN, BUT DID NOT SQUARE UP. THIS SEEMED UNUSUAL TO ME, SO I KEPT WATCHING IT. (NOTE: I AM NOT A PILOT BUT SEE PLANES TAKING OFF AND LANDING EVERY DAY) THE PLANE CONTINUED TO ARC LEFT, MAKING A CONTINUAL CURVE BACK TOWARD THE RUNWAY. IT LOOKED FOR A MOMENT AS IF IT WOULD CRASH INTO MY CAR OR ONE OF THE HANGARS (PRIVATE). THE PLANE THEN LEFT ITS LEFTWARD ARC (AFTER IT HAD CIRCLED ABOUT 270°), TURNED A BIT RIGHT, THEN NOSE DOWN INTO THE GROUND. I EXITED MY CAR, CALLED 911, AND FOLLOWED THE INSTRUCTIONS OF THE DISPATCHER.

Signature: _____

[REDACTED]

My student and I were doing sport pilot checkride prep and we were practicing lost procedures and pilotage. As I was instructing how to find the KFGU airport while approaching from the East I was pointing out all the ground reference points. We had made position reports on the 10 miles out and entering the 45 degree points. Approximately 3 miles east of the field and setting up for a 45 degree entry to the downwind leg for runway 21, we saw an airplane on short final for runway 3. I called Unicom and confirmed the landing runway was 21. Unicom confirmed that the winds were favoring runway 21. No other radio calls by any other aircraft were made.

We continued onto the downwind and asked Unicom if an aircraft had just landed on 3, Unicom confirmed but gave no other information. I cautioned my student to be looking for the landing aircraft (approaching from the east side the runway is very difficult to see). As we lined up abeam the runway numbers. I saw the accident aircraft in a climbing left turn, approximately 80-100ft above the departure end of runway 3. I called and said "aircraft at collegedale airport, are you on the radio"? No reply. My student asked if he (the accident aircraft) was staying in the pattern, I said that I didn't know but we would watch him. As that conversation happened, the accident aircraft made a steep bank (45-60 degree) to the right with a high nose attitude, appearing to attempt a return to the runway.

I thought it was a banner plane maneuvering for a pick up due to his low altitude and steep bank angles. As he progressed through the turn, (essentially facing us at an easterly heading) the nose dropped and the aircraft began a slow rotation and high descent. He fell from about 80-100 ft agl and made a 270 degree rotation, impacting left wing low.

I told my student that I was taking the controls to land and administer first aide if able. We had a fire extinguisher on board and I planned to use it in the event of post impact fire. There was no fire. I called immediately and told Unicom that an aircraft had crashed on the end of the runway and needed assistance. As we landed and slowed to the crash site (just off the runway) we could tell that the visible occupants had already died. I called the Unicom and told them to get medical help ASAP. We continued into the FBO as there was nothing we could do to help.

I left my name and number with the first officer on the scene.

Bruce Richard Whittamore

6/11/16

3:15 PM (LCL)

[Redacted signature]