

Inspector Statement

On December 27, 2016, Inspector Aaron deVogel was notified of a missing aircraft (Cessna 182H, N1839X, serial number 18255939) in Gatlinburg TN. The aircraft was not found until late that evening. The aircraft was discovered on Bearpen Hollow Branch in the Smoky Mountains at an elevation of 5500' at N35°38'53" W83°27'25". The National Guard aircrew inserted 2 crew members onto the mountain top to check for survivors. The 3 occupants were deceased.

On December 28, 2016, Inspector deVogel traveled to Gatlinburg airport to meet with TEMA, the National Park Rangers and the National Guard aircrew that discovered the wreckage. 10 Park Rangers started climbing to the wreckage to assist in the recovery of the victims that morning. The National Guard aircrew inserted Inspector deVogel and 2 medics near the accident site. The Cessna 182 was secured to trees to prevent it from sliding down the mountain side. Inspector deVogel photographed the wreckage and recovered the radios, GPS (pieces) and the transponder.

- The control cables were mostly intact with 1 cable notably stretched and broken. A true continuity check could not be performed due to the severity of the wreckage and the mountain side.
- Fuel tanks were ruptured due to impact with terrain. A fuel smell was still around the aircraft. There was no sign of post-crash fire.
- Fuel selector switch was not found at the scene.
- ELT was functioning correctly. It was turned off during victim recovery.
- Engine was separated from the aircraft with all engine mounts broken. The engine sump was separated from the engine. The crankshaft flange was severed from the engine. The front of the engine case was broken and missing. Compression could not be verified.
- The propeller was separated from the engine. One blade was found 10 feet down the hill from the wreckage another blade under the wreckage.
- The female victim was ejected from the aircraft and came to rest on the left side of the aircraft approximately 5 feet from the wreckage. Her legs were severed and also to the left of the aircraft. The male adult victim was still where the seats came to rest but could not tell if he was on the right or left side of the aircraft. After finding the rudder pedals, an adult male shoe was wedged between crushed metal aft of the left side rudder pedals.
- None of the instruments or engine controls could be verified.
- 1 propeller blade was found under the right wing. A second blade was found at the bottom of the wreckage. One of the two blades was not recovered.

After the victims were removed from the wreckage, Inspector deVogel photographed the remaining area.

On December 30, 2016, AMF Aviation recovered the wreckage using Pirate Airlift. The wreckage was removed in 4 lifts. The wings and fuselage were lifted first, then the tail section, then the engine and finally a "bagster" of miscellaneous pieces. The wreckage was then loaded on a trailer. The horizontal stabilizers were cut and removed by the recovery crew for transportation. The Airworthiness Certificate

and Registration were recovered at the drop zone. The wreckage was transported to Springfield, TN. A layout will be conducted on January 5, 2017.

Contact information for recovery crews for victims and aircraft.

- Park Service; Jared St. Clair, [REDACTED]
- TEMA; Bob Crane, [REDACTED]
- AMF Aviation; Chris Ferraraccio, [REDACTED]
- Pirate Airlift; Mike Provost, [REDACTED]
- National Guard; Aircraft 23892 HH-60L TN Army National Guard, AASF #2 Louisville, TN
CW3 Matthew Jagers
CW2 Drew Corday
Sgt. Matthew Belcher
SFC. Tracy Banta, [REDACTED]
SSgt. Giovanni De Zuani

Contact information for victim's family.

- Justin Patterson [REDACTED] (Kim Smith Brother-in-law)
- Greg Starling [REDACTED] (David Starling brother)
- Ken Oddy [REDACTED] (Mechanic)

On January 5, 2017, Inspector deVogel traveled to Springfield, TN to witness an inspection of the aircraft and the engine with the NTSB. The inspections were performed by Textron Aviation and Continental Motors.

- Yellow primer under right wing leading edge indicates leading edge repair. Verified by FAA Form 337 dated 1-27-1999.
- Continuity of cables checked thru both wings and tail section.
- Flap motor indicated flaps were full up.
- Service Bulletin SE-84-9 had been complied with.
- STC vortex generators verified by log book entry on 10-15-2014.
- Tires verified by FAA Form 337 dated 8-1-2014
- Elevator trim motor measured 1 inch from root to center hole.
- Throttle, mixture and prop lever found full forward.
- 1 propeller blade was recovered.

On January 6, 2017, Inspector deVogel received and reviewed 1 airframe log book and 1 engine log book. The propeller log and historical logs were not provided by the mechanic. After contacting him again he stated that the owner of the aircraft has all other logs. A request was sent to the owners brother. The following is a recap of the log books:

- Last Annual Inspection performed on 10-3-2015 at tach time 158.0
- Installed STC SA00834SE (vortex generators) on 10-15-2014 at tach 16.2
- Installed new tach on 7-29-2014 at tach 2437.29.
- 91.411 and 91.413 checks were last performed on 1-17-2014.
- The first logbook entry in this log starts on 6-1-2004 and establishes airframe total time as 2342.75. The next entry is an Annual Inspection on 5-1-2010 at 2365.24. The aircraft's next Annual is on 11-5-2011. 5 months overdue. The next Annual is 8-22-2013. 9 months overdue. Then 9-18-2014. Less than 1 month overdue.
- Engine log book starts at 7-1-2008 with major overhaul of engine. The entry lists N1839X as the specific aircraft. The next entry is an Annual inspection on 5-1-2010 at 0.0 SMOH. The rest of the Annuals follow along with the above airframe logs.
- There does not appear to be any pages missing or removed from the logbooks.
- The owner performed 2 oil changes after its last Annual inspection. The last oil change was on 5-21-2016 at Total Time 2645.59.

The statement above is based on notes taken at each location.

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