

ON DECEMBER 02, 2017, An AMATEUR BUILT GYROCOPTER CRASHED INTO A DENSELY WOODED AREA IN DESOTO COUNTY, MS APPROXIMATELY 1600 FEET FROM THE RUNWAY AND SUBSEQUENTLY CAUGHT FIRE AND BURNED. A SINGULAR PERSON INTERVIEWED HAPPENED TO BE HUNTING IN THE WOODS NOT FAR FROM THE CRASH SCENE STATED THAT HE HEARD A BANG WHICH HE PASSED OFF AS A GUN SHOT FROM ANOTHER HUNTER. THE INDIVIDUAL PROCEEDED TO LEAVE THE WOODS AT DARK, APPROXIMATELY 17:15 AND SAW WHAT HE THOUGHT WAS A GRASS FIRE. HE THEN WENT TO A NEARBY HOUSE AND CALLED 911. UPON ARRIVAL, RESPONDING TO WHAT THE FIRE DEPARTMENT THOUGHT WAS A BRUSH FIRE, THE FIRE FIGHTING PERSONNEL REALIZED ONCE THEY GOT CLOSE ENOUGH THAT THE FIRE WAS CAUSED BY AN AIRCRAFT CRASH. IT WAS AT THAT POINT THAT THE ACCIDENT WAS REPORTED TO THE FAA. THE AIRCRAFT AND FATALITIES WERE BADLY BURNED DUE TO THE POST CRASH FIRE. THE AIRCRAFT DATA PLATE WAS FOUND, BUT UNREADABLE. THE IDENTITY OF THE FATALITIES AND AIRCRAFT WERE CORROBORATED DUE TO A MISSING AIRCRAFT FROM THE EAGLE'S RIDGE AIRPORT. EXAMINATION OF THE TREES INDICATED THAT THE AIRCRAFT DESCENDED AT A RAPID RATE AT APPROXIMATELY A 75 DEGREE ANGLE TO TERRAIN. THE DAMAGE TO THE AIRCRAFT LANDING GEAR ALSO INDICATED THAT IT IMPACTED ON ITS LEFT HAND SIDE. A SEARCH FOR PILOT AND AIRCRAFT LOGBOOKS WAS CONDUCTED AND STILL CONTINUES. IT MAY BECOME CLEAR THAT THE RECORDS WERE IN THE AIRCRAFT AND BURNED. AN AMENDMENT TO THIS REPORT WILL BE MADE AS THE INVESTIGATION CONTINUES.

Observations at the scene were as follows:

1. The engine was still attached to the airframe, although the flight station was badly burned and unrecognizable. Both main rotor blades were attached to the rotor head, with a three-foot section of one tip broken off, most likely due to impact with trees.
2. Based on the cut marks in trees in close proximity to the crash site, the aircraft descended at a steep angle to terrain, approximately 70 to 75 degrees judged by the chop marks on the trees and seemed to have rotational force.
3. The aircraft appeared to be in a left hand skid at impact due to the left main landing gear being broken and folded to the right side, laying underneath the right main landing gear.
4. Control continuity was not obtainable due to post-crash fire damage.
5. The composite "pusher" prop blades were sheared from the hub, all three blades were recovered and appeared to shear under rotational force due to the observed damage and distance from the main wreckage. Witness marks were observed in the immediate proximity of the hub that would lend to the fact that the prop blades sheared upon impact with the ground, not prior.
6. All flight controls, composite fuselage components, seats, and avionics on-board the aircraft were either burned beyond recognition or disintegrated due to the post-crash fire.
7. Aircraft maintenance logs were not obtainable, and suspected to be on-board the aircraft during the crash and burned in the fire. This is suspected based on interviews with a local airfield mechanic.

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