

Inspector Statement

Jennifer A Viteritto
ASI / BHM FSDO / SO-09
01/29/2018

Subject: Aircraft accident N900L LaPine, AL (AL09)

On January 28, 2018 at approximately 1750 hrs local the Flight Standards District office was notified of a plane that had crashed and was first reported to the NTSB and later found at the end of runway AL09. The person who contacted the NTSB on January 28th identified himself as Mike Shepard and stated he was the pilot of the aircraft.

On January 29, FAA Airworthiness Inspector Viteritto and Inspector Williams arrived at the scene at AL09, private airstrip owned by Mr. Arthur Persky where aircraft, N900L was located near the end of the runway in the swamp. Mr. Persky is also the registered owner on record for the crashed aircraft. During an interview with Mr. Persky, he stated he sold the aircraft about a week prior to three individuals from Arkansas. Mr. Persky also stated the accident happened midday on Saturday, 1/27/2018 and he personally helped the pilot out of the aircraft. Mr. Persky stated the pilot's name was Les and Les called his mechanic Dave and Dave and another guy came with a truck and unloaded the aircraft. Mr. Persky stated he didn't know what was loaded on the aircraft. Mr. Persky provided a bill of sale reflected he sold the aircraft..

Inspector Viteritto contacted Mike Shepard from the scene on 01/29/2018 who claimed to be the pilot of the aircraft during the crash. Mr. Shepard stated he was on his 3rd flight of the day when he took off from LaPine airport, had a power loss issue, didn't know why, felt the aircraft pull to the left, and trees scraping on right wing, then the aircraft turned 180 degrees and landed in the swamp at the end of the runway. Mr. Shepard stated he was not headed anywhere but was completing his 5 takeoffs and landings required to stay current for carrying passengers. He stated his mechanic David Brainerd just put new tires on the aircraft, changed the oil in both engines and installed a new battery a couple days ago. Mr. Shepard said he believed he had full fuel in both center tanks. Mr. Shepard stated when he landed; he departed the aircraft, contacted his insurance company, then contacted the NTSB and went home to Arkansas. When inspector Viteritto asked Mr. Shepard why his pink temporary registration was not in the aircraft, he stated he just bought the aircraft two days ago and had a bill of sale with the aircraft records. Mr. Shepard stated the aircraft records are in Arkansas. Inspector Viteritto noticed the aircraft battery was not in the aircraft and asked Mr. Shepard if he knew where the aircraft battery was and he stated he did not and he wouldn't have been able to start the engines without the battery installed. Inspector Viteritto asked Mr. Persky at the scene if he knew where the aircraft battery was and he stated he did not and "things have a way of walking off."

Left wing: Had leading edge, trailing edge and severe tip damage

Right wing: damage from hitting the trees underneath and curled upward severely from close contact and wrapping around the trees.

Fuselage: Substantial damage especially to the right side, which was creased and folded in approx 15degrees. Water damage, partially submerged, nose cone separated.

Flight Controls: Unable to determine all flight control movement due to severe damage.

Propellers: Did not appear to feathered. Propeller levers found full forward.

Horizontal Stabilizer: Minimal Damage

Vertical Stabilizer: Some areas of significant damage, did not move the pedals while the aircraft was in the water.

Landing Gear: unable to determine the severity of the damage, but the aircraft landed with the gear down.

Pilot: No injuries reported

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