

28 AUG 2018

STATEMENT REGARDING OFF-AIRPORT LANDING, N35442/OMAHA 35, 22 2300L AUG 2018

AIA JESSE REMMEY, TFO-I

At approximately 2100L on 22 AUG 2018, C-206 Night Owl N35442, operating as Omaha 35, departed KBGR (Bangor, ME) ISO a previously scheduled mission in the Augusta, ME area. At approximately 2230L, after completion of the assigned mission, OM35 returned VFR direct from the Augusta, ME area to KBGR. Portland approach assigned OM35 7000' for the initial cruise back to BGR. At approximately 2245, Portland Approach Control handed OM35 over to Bangor Approach Control, who assigned a descent to 3000' in anticipation of a visual approach to runway 33. Shortly after beginning decent, I heard a loud "clunking" noise emanate from what sounded to me like the lower part of the engine, consistent in my experience with a major mechanical failure within the engine. Shortly thereafter, the mission PIC, AIA Duane Tedesco, reported to me that the engine was not making full power.

As a C-206 TFO-I, I make it a personal SOP to always have the Aerocomputers mapping system set to VFR sectional/Aircraft center when not directly engaged in surveillance activity, especially at night. Therefore, I was able to immediately recommend AIA Tedesco steer north towards K2B7 (Pittsfield, ME), at our 9 o'clock and 7 miles. I utilized the aerocomputers database to advise AIA Tedesco that the Unicom frequency was 122.8 and the field had pilot controlled lighting.

AIA Tedesco then declared an emergency with Bangor Approach, advising them we were attempting to make 2B7. By my recollection, the engine sounded as if it was still developing partial power at that point.

As the aircraft continued a rapid under/unpowered descent, AIA Tedesco advised both myself and Bangor ATC that OM35 was unable to make RWY 36 at 2B7 and that we would be performing an off-airport landing somewhere to the south of the airport. At that time, I rechecked the aft cabin in preparation for impact. Due to our planning to RON in Bangor, as well as having my AS350 flight helmet bag with me¹, and a BMS downlink unit, there was an unusually large amount of baggage aft of the rear seats. However, I had ensured on pre-flight the location of the survival kit and stowed the baggage as low as possible behind the seats. I chose not to dig for the survival kit at that time as I was unsure how long until impact and wanted to be facing forward. Our soft sided overnight bags were next to me in the left rear seat, which I believe further protected me during the crash sequence.

Also upon being advised by AIA Tedesco to prepare for off-field landing, I changed the Aerocomputers map from VFR Sectional to topographic (Satellite would not load) in an effort to gain and share situational awareness on our potential landing zone. AIA Tedesco simultaneously zoomed in on the Garmin 750 for this same purpose.

¹ I had been advised of a possible requirement to fly RD Priddy on a tour of Houlton sector in N848BP the next day.

Shortly thereafter, OM35 impacted trees approximately .5 miles south of RWY 36 at 2B7, in what I observed as a full stall attitude with flaps set at full. He also later advised me that he had pulled the mixture to cutoff just prior to impact, although due to the lack of post-crash fire, I believe the engine had been completely failed at that point long enough to cool down and not be an ignition source. I maintained full consciousness throughout the crash sequence. To my perception, on initial impact, the aircraft pivoted around its vertical axis approximately 180 degrees, continued tail-first slightly northbound, and dropped into its final resting spot approximately 25 feet below. The maneuver was 1g throughout for me. During the crash sequence, I observed AIA Tedesco's upper torso and head impact the instrument panel and shift right, coming to rest against the sensor computer console.

As I was fully conscious and not experiencing any pain, my immediate concerns were AIA Tedesco's condition and the potential for post-crash fire. I verbally engaged AIA Tedesco and he did not respond. After approximately 30 seconds, AIA Tedesco began to moan, at which time I attempted to exit the aircraft through the right rear door, finding it blocked by the fully extended flaps. I then observed that the left front pilot's door had broken free of the aircraft and was lying on the ground under the wing. I exited through the pilot's door opening, at which point AIA Tedesco had regained consciousness and reported to me that he could taste blood, and that he could not see. I assisted AIA Tedesco from the aircraft and performed a rapid physical exam of his upper body², finding a several large lacerations of the forehead/face, and most notably, obvious bleeding into the interior of his right eye. AIA Tedesco also displayed multiple signs of a severe concussion (headache, short-term memory loss, disorientation).

My first acts were to move AIA Tedesco and myself away from the airplane (fire potential) and call 911 (I remained on the line with 911 until rescue). I turned on my phone's location services, attempted to confirm with 911 our location, and requested assistance. After several minutes with no fire, we then returned to the aircraft to retrieve the first aid and survival kits. I then applied a pressure dressing to the largest of AIA Tedesco's lacerations (forehead). AIA Tedesco and I both called our wives and I called my mother. I then inventoried the aircraft survival kit, with a focus on immediate need items such as bandages and signaling devices. I placed several bandages in my pocket in case I needed to add to the pressure dressing I had applied to AIA Tedesco. I then located the signal flare pistol but was unable to locate the rounds to go in it. I instead held onto a handheld "chain" type flare.

At this time, AIA Tedesco was on the phone with AMOC who was also working to coordinate our rescue. 911 then requested that I find the shortest path to the bank of the Sebasticook River as our extraction was planned by boat. I then scouted a route to the river, roughly 100 yards away.

The 911 operator then requested that I light the rescue flare as he believed that the rescue boat was approaching our location. I was unfamiliar with that particular type of flare and the instructions were overly simple. I hesitated to light the flare due to the poor instructions, but did so at the urging of the 911 operator. While lighting the flare I received a severe burn to my left hand. Unfortunately, the flare burned out before being observed by rescue personnel.

911 then requested that I remain on the bank of the river with my flashlight until the rescue boat arrived. I instructed AIA Tedesco that I would be by the river and to remain with the aircraft. While on the riverbank I checked in verbally once a minute with AIA Tedesco to ensure he was staying

² I am certified as a Senior Outdoor Emergency Care Technician through the National Ski Patrol

conscious and at the aircraft wreckage. After approximately 20 minutes, the rescue boat arrived and extracted us to ambulances waiting at the approach end of 2B7 RWY 36.