

November 3, 2019

Statement of William Leslie McNease

Background

My name is William Leslie McNease. I reside at [REDACTED] Kingwood, TX [REDACTED] My cell phone number is [REDACTED] My Pilot Certificate number is [REDACTED]

I am a current pilot and hold a Second Class Medical. I hold a US ATP with 27 type ratings with 19,176 flight hours and ratings from Switzerland, Malawi, Italy, Costa Rica, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, and Hungary. I am a current CFII, Gold Seal. I was an Army pilot flying the Grumman OV-1 Mohawk in Vietnam (172 combat missions) with a total of 880 flight hours PIC, Instructor and Test Pilot. I was an Experimental and Production Test Pilot at the Gulfstream factory in Savannah, GA.

I am a retired FAA employee, Air Traffic, Flight Inspection Pilot, General Aviation Operations Inspector, Air Carrier Operations Inspector and Assistant Air Crew Program Manager for the Airbus 300 at the Memphis CMO. As an Operations Inspector I was Inspector in Charge (IIC) for many fatal and non-fatal airplane, helicopter and lighter-than-air accidents.

Accident

I arrived at the Stuart Airport at 0900 on Friday, Nov. 1, 2019. I was accompanied by Larry New, an assistant to Dr. Joe Masessa. We reported to the Air Show side of the airport but found N10VD located on the FBO side. We went to the FBO, Jet Center, and had the aircraft towed to the airshow side.

Dr. Joe was attending the pilot briefing and didn't get to the aircraft until approximately 1100. Both Larry and I did a preflight of the aircraft. Larry is not a pilot or a former crew chief but he was familiar with the aircraft and had been acting as a crew chief for a number of years with Dr. Joe.

Other than the aircraft being very dirty, with oil and hydraulic stains, the only other issues were low oil quantity in the right engine and some oil leaks in the right engine. A mechanic was called to check the leaks and the mechanic (Josh) arrived. Dr. Joe arrived to supervise the inspection for the oil leaks and a number of oil lines had to be tightened. At that time one quart of oil was added to the right engine, bringing the sight level up to $\frac{1}{2}$. That was a normal amount.

On my preflight all of the panels and doors were secured and my visual inspection of the flight controls, speed brakes, engines/props and landing gear were normal with the exception of all the tires. All of the tires exhibited dry rot. The tire treads were good.

The fuel truck arrived from Jet Center and I set the refueling panel to fill the main tank only. Dr. Joe told me the drop tanks were empty. I topped off the main tank with 213 gallons of Jet-A. The capacity of the main fuel tank on the OV-1 is 297 gallons. The fuel was not checked for contaminants or water by me or Dr. Joe.

Dr. Joe and I spoke about the weather and wind. He laughed and said the Mohawk liked the wind. The slot time for Dr. Joe's practice was about 1315 but there were delays due to the weather. The weather was approximately 15-1600 broken with breaks in the overcast with relatively strong winds. I do not have the actual weather but that was from my own observations. After Dr. Joe got in the airplane it rained for about 5 minutes. He sat in the airplane from about 1230 until his departure. I did notice that Dr. Joe was doing text messaging on his cell phone the entire time he was in the aircraft and only stopped texting just prior to engine start.

Dr. Joe did not seem to under the influence of any type of drug or alcohol from my experience as a Deputy Sheriff and FAA Inspector. He appeared to be in good health both physically and mentally. He was happy to be at the airshow and excited to do the flight demonstration. After the arrival show of the F-16 Viper and observing the high G maneuvers of the F-16 he commented that he wished he could do that.

I briefed him on me acting as crew chief since I hadn't been with him before and told him I would be directly in front of the airplane to observe the engine starts and would remain there until we completed the flight control checks. He advised me that he never did a flight control check with a crew chief. I found that to be odd since that was a SOP in the military. He mentioned he would check the controls as he taxied.

When it was time to start the engines I was in front of the airplane and both engines started with no issues. Josh, the mechanic, looked under the right engine to assure there were no leaks and gave me thumbs up. The ground power was removed by Larry New. I closed the step to enter the cockpit prior to the left engine start.

I marshalled the airplane out, gave Dr. Joe a salute which he returned and he taxied to the end of the runway. As he was taxiing I noticed he did a complete flight control check, elevators, ailerons, flaps, inboard ailerons, speed brakes and rudders. All flight controls appeared to move and work normally.

I then walked into the grassy area of the "hot ramp" to observe the takeoff and flight. My position was approximately 2000-3000 feet from the crash site. I had a clear view of the entire flight. The takeoff was normal, with normal landing gear and flap retraction. Dr. Joe had told Larry and me that he was not going to attempt any acrobatic maneuvers due to the cloud deck and windy conditions and that his only reason to fly was to visually locate the acrobatic box so he would be ready of the show on Saturday. His intent was to make a slow speed low pass followed by a high speed low pass and a normal landing to a full stop.

On his last pass turning base to final it appeared to me that he overshot his planned pass over the runway and steepened his bank to get more aligned. From my viewpoint it appeared the bank exceeded 90 degrees and the aircraft appeared to do an accelerated stall with a rapid roll to the right to the inverted position, the nose dropped to what appeared to be 45 degrees nose down followed by the impact and fireball. This was a non-survivable crash.

I did not observe the speed brakes deploy or the landing gear extend.

I gave my statement to the Martin County Sheriff's department, Detective Jennifer Jaques, case 19-17820 and to the FAA representatives prior to leaving to return home.

Observations and comments:

I was surprised in my talks with Dr. Joe to find out that after owning the Mohawk for 7-8 years there were many questions he still had about the airplane, its operation and the equipment he had on the airplane. He was very personable but he wanted me there to answer questions about the airplane. At least twice on the day of the crash he instructed the people he was talking to ask me their questions.

We talked about the way he operated the airplane and why he didn't feather the propellers when shutting down the engine as the checklist called for and like we did in the military on each shutdown. His response was that prop motors cost money and he didn't believe it was necessary to feather the props.

Dr. Joe had, I believe, more than 8000 flight hours but not very many in the OV-1. He had previously said that he had plenty of turboprop flight hours so the OV-1 would be easy for him to fly. He did receive training from at least two former US Army OV-1 pilots but how much I don't know. He did not serve in the military. While the Mohawk was fully aerobatic except for snap maneuvers or spins our training in the military was always above 10,000' AGL when performing rolls, recovery from vertical flight and recovery from inverted flight. We also had ejection seats.

While my FAA/NTSB training always taught me to investigate not to speculate, I will leave it to the professionals with both organizations to determine the final cause.

From my part as a direct witness to the events leading up to the tragic accident and to the accident itself I would consider this to be a pilot error accident, caused by over banking, loss of control. I obviously do not have access to the fuel truck, radio communications with the tower about what this approach was going to be, flight control continuity checks or medical issues with the pilot. Training could be a secondary cause.

Please feel free to contact me at any time.

[REDACTED]

William L. (Bill) McNease

Douglas R Davis Statement - Incident (ERA20FA027)

Cellphone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

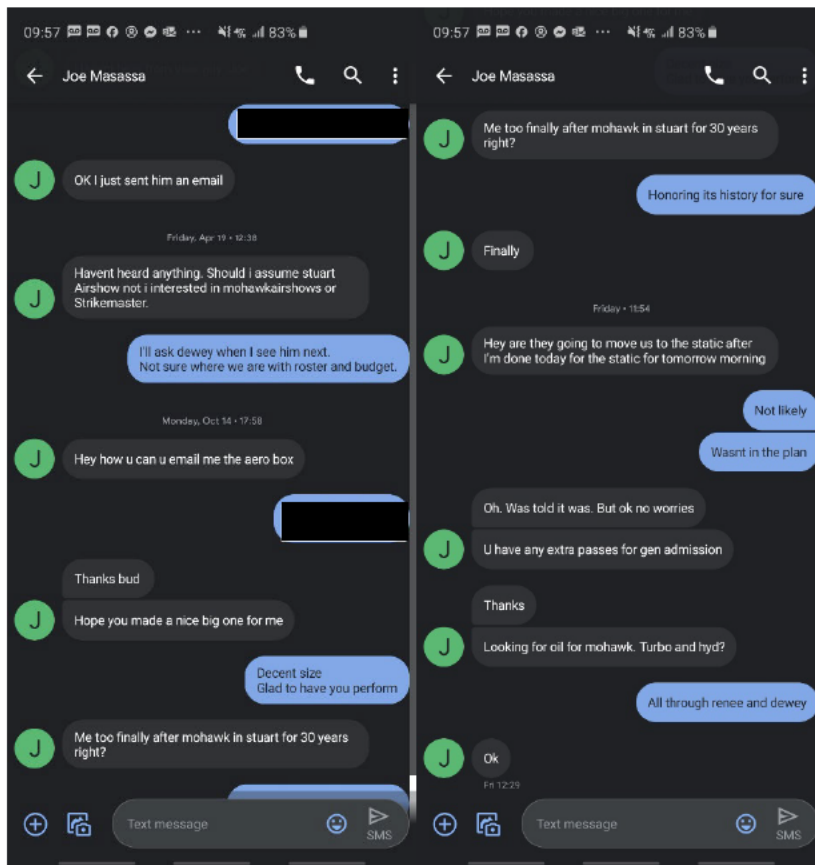
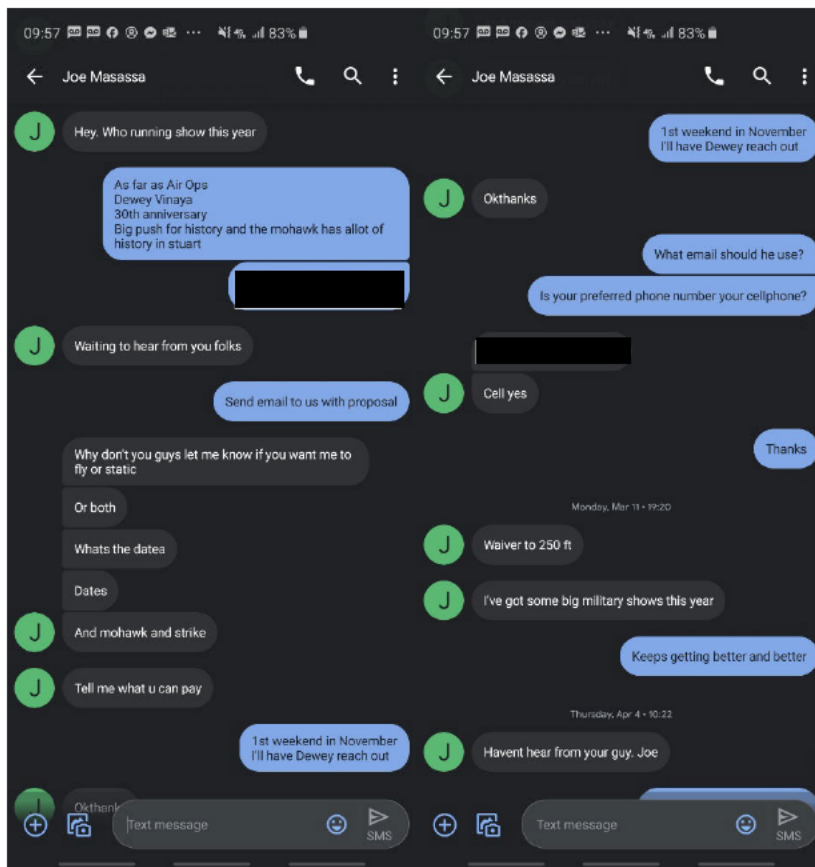
- I am a 15th year volunteer of the Stuart Air Show, 9th Year Site Planner, 6th Year Board Member, and aviation enthusiast who is not a pilot, but knows his was in and around planes.
- I first met Joe Masessa flew into the Stuart Air Show with his OV-1D Mohawk (N10VD) in 2011 as a static display. Joe also brought his BAC Strike Master to the show as a static aircraft when it was not under maintenance.
- I do my best to engage with all the pilots who attend the Air show each year and develop a relationship with them. Joe was very outgoing and loved to talk about everything about his plane. After a couple years of talking about going flying with him, on 2014-April-06 I had the privilege of flying with him in the Mohawk (N10VD) from the Sun 'n Fun Air Show in Lakeland, Florida (LAL) to North County Airport in Palm Beach, Florida (F45). The flight was amazing and the controls were tight. Like many pilots I have flown with, he was excited to share the joy of flight with a passenger instead of flying solo. While we were flying, he described the Mohawk as his pride and joy. I knew him more as being a pilot who loved to fly and was a Doctor on the side. He also described his aircraft as the coolest business write off ever since he used it to fly to his various offices across the states. After we landed at North County and were taxiing to the FBO while continuing to talk about the aircraft and its characteristics. During the conversation, I noticed that one of the taxiways was blocked off with some low-level markers as pictured and circled below. Had I not called it out to him, we would have run over them. Had we not been talking about the controls in detail, I don't believe he would have missed seeing them. Other than that little miss, the flying was very much in control.



[REDACTED]

- I spoke with Joe Masessa at approximately 10am on Friday, 2019-November-01 under the Pilot Hospitality Tent located near the midpoint of Runway 16-34 and approximately 400 feet from his aircraft. His mood was like that of a kid on Christmas morning because he was finally and for the first time going to be able to fly a performance at his “home” show. His movements appeared normal, based on the typical one air show weekend of the year that I interact with him. We also spoke about his other aircraft, the BAC Strike Master, which has been in maintenance for some complicated electrical work and he had recently found someone that was really good at working with it. Joe excitedly stated that he recently found some proper wiring diagrams to get it back up in the air and would talk later about going flying in it together in a few weeks.
- At the time of the performance and crash, I was working with some vendors at the north end of Runway 16 and facing north. I did not view any of his performance or the actual crash. Following the crash when the flames were extinguished, I was down at the actual crash site as a representative of the Board of Directors from the Stuart Air Show to determine how we were proceeding with public notification.
- On Friday, late afternoon, I don’t know which time, Ronda Krill [REDACTED] arrived at the “main gate” (Airport Gate 11) of the airshow. Amy Bottegal and I met with Mrs. Krill her and her 2 friends in the vehicle they arrived in. During the conversation, Mrs. Krill hesitantly asked “Do you think he did it on purpose”. I responded with “absolutely not” and continued with reviewing with her how my conversation had gone that morning. She then switched into talking about him and his love for the aircraft.
- On Saturday Evening, Joe Masessa’s brother (Jeff) arrived on site with his (Jeff’s) girlfriend & son, Joe’s Nephew. I was able to introduce myself before they headed down to the crash site for some closure. During that time, I had to go meet a friend who lost her husband in a helicopter crash in July of 2019. Once I finished speaking with her, I met back up with Joe’s family to help them with collecting Joe’s Car. We met at the vehicle and Jeff proceeded to go through the car and remove and donate any aviation-oriented items to the show and anyone who could use them. These items included a brand-new wheel for the Mohawk along with some pictures of the aircraft and some Mohawk airshow branded pillows. Other items in car were related to his medical practice (unopened microscope, medical tubing which looked like oxygen tubing, etc.) While we were going through the vehicle, the family, Dewey Vinaya, and myself were talking about how much Joe loved aviation and how Jeff had intentionally setup the various dermatology practices near airports so that he could easily fly from location to location instead of driving. At no time did he mention anything pessimistic about Joe or that he had any concerns.
- Attached below are my recent texts with Joe which are dominantly about the Stuart Air Show.

[REDACTED]



[redacted]

To whom it may concern,

My name is Joshua Collins. I was told by my boss, Matthew Hood of Luhtech Jet, that Mr. Masessa had requested a mechanic to come out to Stuart to check some oil lines to make sure they were tight. He said he noticed that there was oil inside of the cowling. When I arrived at the aircraft I was told I would have to wait until after his practice run. While Mr. Masessa was waiting, he told me that the reason he requested a mechanic to come out to check some oil lines, was due to the fact that he had some extensive work done previously to that engine. He then mentioned that he added a quart of oil to the #2 (R/H) engine and that he had cleaned the oil off the inside of the cowling. After realizing that he did have more time before the practice run, Mr. Masessa opened the cowling on the #2 (R/H) engine. I was then asked to check the oil lines on the bottom R/H side of the #2 (R/H) engine to make sure they were tight and I did so. After I used a few wrenches to confirm the tightness of the oil lines, Mr. Masessa said it was time for him to go. He then closed the cowling and took the plane.

Joshua P. Collins

West Palm Beach, FL

LP

WITNESS STATEMENT – FBO

DATE OF STATEMENT: 11 / 01 / 2019

NAME: Michael DeJesus

OFFICE NO: ()

ADDRESS:

HOME NO: ()

MOBILE NO: [REDACTED]

DATE OF ACCIDENT / INCIDENT: 11 / 01 / 2019

TIME: 13:43 AM / PM

LOCATION: Atlantic Aviation SUA AIRFIELD

DESCRIBE EVENTS OBSERVED BY YOU:

I used 2JT27 to fuel N10VD, Mohawk. The pilot had requested a top off positive. The panel was already set along with the fuel port open. I hooked up and fueled 214 gallons positive. Afterwards I unhooked the hose and bonding cable and pilot told me he would take care of closing, the fuel panel and fuel port. After the crash, Stuart Jet Center personnel came over and within our conversation, they had mentioned, to their knowledge, that the aircraft had some oil or oil pump issue prior.

[REDACTED]

(Signature)

11 / 1 / 19

(Date)

Friday November 1, 2019

I, Lyndsay Davis was at my residence, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Stuart, FL [REDACTED] when the crash occurred.

I was letting dogs out for a potty break, approximately 1:09pm I was calling them inside when I heard the plane flying, and stepped outside to watch. The plane was climbing fast, I could see the underside of the plane, and then the plane changed direction and began hard descent nose down with canopy facing me. Immediately upon the plane making contact with ground, there was an explosion.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Lyndsay Davis

STATEMENT

11-1-19

MY NAME IS JAMES A. TUCCIARONE
ON STUART AIRPORT FRIDAY NOV 1, 2019,
I WAS THE AIRBOSS FOR THE STUART
AIRSHOW. I CONDUCTED A NORMAL
PILOT BRIEFING AT 9:30AM WITH ALL
PERFORMING PILOTS IN ATTENDANCE.

THE SHOW BEGAN AS SCHEDULED AT 11:50AM
ABOUT THE 4TH ACT WAS THE MOHAWK OV-1
THE PILOT WAS CONTACTED ON THE HOT
RAMP AT APPROXIMATELY 1:00PM AND
ADVISED THE WC WERE READY WHEN HE WAS
THE A/C TAXIED TO RWY 30 FOR TAKEOFF
THE PILOT WAS ISSUED THE WINDS AND
CURRENT CEILING. HE ADVISED THAT
HE WOULD FLY A LOW SHOW. THE
PLANE TOOK OFF AT 1:08PM. AFTER
APPROXIMATELY 2 MANEUVERS, THE PLANE
CRASHED IN THE EMAS ON THE EAST
END OF RWY 12-30. I IMMEDIATELY
TURNED TO THE FIRE CHIEF, BUT THE
VEHICLES WERE ALREADY ROLLING. I
ADVISED HIM THAT THE FIELD WAS HIS

JAMES A TUCCIARONE

Valley City, OH

1) Rocco J Napoli, JR

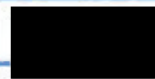
2)



3) Operation Section Chief / Command Staff

4) Was with the Incident Commander and Airboss on Front center show stage. I was speaking to the IC, facing the Alpha runway and witnessed the Aircraft make impact with the ground. I saw the explosion and smoke. I immediately responded to the scene with the ARFF units for life safety and fire suppression.

5)



Martin County Fire-Rescue

1) Christian Martyn

2)

3) Incident Commander

4) Incident Commander with Air Boss
Operations Section chief stated turn
around and seen flames from impact
immediately dispatched units and
mitigated the incident.

5)

- 1 Sesse Wilkinson
- 2 [REDACTED]
- 3 Sikorsky Crash Rescue
- 4 Upon arrival on scene of air crash. Saw heavy Black Smoke. Picked out remain in truck until D.O. finished Roaming flames. Got out & helped Martin County Fire look around scene

FF EMT

[REDACTED]

(1) NAME (2) CONTACT # (3) UNIT (4) BRIEF DESCRIPTION
UPON ARRIVAL
(5) ACTIONS TAKEN

1 Jared Elton Boney

2

3 Sikorsky Crash Rescue

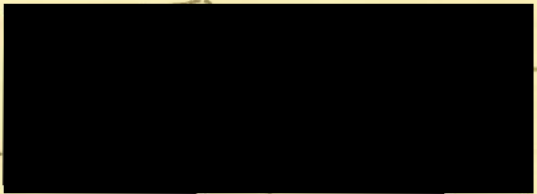
4/5 Upon arrival I witnessed a crashed aircraft scattered over the EMASS and adjacent area. Martin County Fire Rescue was already on scene and they asked us to assist with fire extinguishment. I applied foam from ARFF vehicle bumper turret and extinguished the fire that was burning from debris on the EMASS. Remained on scene until released.

1. SCOTT MATTHEW MELAGRAND

2. 

3. SIKORSKY CRASH RESCUE

4. UPON ARRIVAL ON SCENE OF AIRCRAFT INCIDENT
VISUAL OF THICK BLACK SMOKE, FLAMES. AND MARTIN
COUNTY FIRE RESCUE. MADE CONTACT WITH MARTIN COUNTY
CHIEF ON SCENE AND WAS ADVISED AND AUTHORIZED
TO FOAM ENTIRE SCENE. ONCE FIRE WAS OUT, BACKED
SR20 OFF SCENE UNTIL FURTHER DIRECTION



#1 BENJAMIN BISHOP

#2 [REDACTED]

#3

NORTH DIVISION COMMAND (4 WHEELER)

#4

UPON ARRIVAL FOUND AIRCRAFT DESTROYED
WITH FIRE AND SMOKE SHOWING. RESPONDED
IMMEDIATELY WHEN LARGE FIRE BALL SHOWED

#5

ASSISTED ENGINE 90 CREW DEPLOY HOSE LINE
AS WELL AS TANKER 90 SUPPLY E-90 WITH
WATER. SUPERVISED CREW MEMBERS AND
MADE SURE CREWS PRESERVED THE SCENE.

[REDACTED]

① Lawrence Evans Crary IV

② [REDACTED]

③ Quick Response Team (QRT) - Captain

④ Arrived first on scene to find total destruction of the aircraft and heavy smoke with active fire. Debris field was spread out over an area approximately 50 yards long by 30 yards wide.

⑤ Arrived on scene, exited vehicle, grabbed Halitron extinguisher, proceeded to area where cockpit should have been, discharged extinguisher, recognized zero chance for survival, withdrew from hot zone, directed incoming units, located pilot remains, worked to establish perimeter

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

1) Steve Parsons

2) [REDACTED]

3) North Division Leader

4) Arrived 30 sec after QRT. Saw Complete devastation of plane in Pieces. Smoke and flames noted around aft area of plane and parts of plane that was on EMAS System.

5) Supervised crews, helped deploy hose line for extinguishment. Walked ~~perimeter~~ perimeter to look for victims.

[REDACTED]

MATTHEW SCHOTANUS

[REDACTED]

QRT FF1

ARRIVED 1ST UNIT ON SCENE, PLANE IN PIECES WITH
FIRE & SMOKE. PILOT DOA, TORSO SEPERATED. GRABBED
HALOGEN EXTINGUISHER & BEGAN EXTINGUISHING. ONCE
EMPTY, BEGAN ASSISTING ENGINE WITH HANDLINE.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Travis Slusher

[REDACTED]

E-90

I Saw Smoke through the woods
Upon arrival Found Plane on Ems and
Grass. There was alot of Smoke and fire.

I was the Driver of E90. I got water and foam
to hand line and established a water Supply.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Daniel Jover

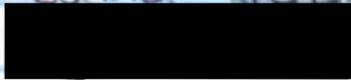
[REDACTED]

E90

Saw smoke and flames past woodline south/east of our location. Went en-route $\approx$ Brush truck / Engine / Tanker / 4wheelers AOS began fire suppression $\approx$ $1\frac{3}{4}$ attack line on majority of wreckage. I backed up FM Pecci on attack line. ARF truck arrived and extinguished area on emas. once fire was out, disconnected hoseline and backed out E90 from area

[REDACTED]

1. Conner Pucci



E90

- Upon arrival, found Plane crashed with rubble/Flame on EMAS as well as grass. Moderate flames and heavy smoke in grass from what appeared to be tail of Plane.
- Pulled 1 3/4 crosslay and extinguished fire with Class B Foam.



Justin Sullivan [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Tanker 90

- Tanker 90 pulled up beside Engine 90 connected to the Engine and started flowing water.
- Pulled up and saw the plane in multiple pieces in flames.

Justin Sullivan
[REDACTED]

John Ewing # [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Brush 90

Arrived on scene to find a single aircraft with major damage and on fire.

Pulled Brush 90 on the North East side of the crash and initiated fire attack. During fire attack found the pilots body. I advised North Division that the pilot was signal 7.

John Ewing
[REDACTED] # [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Hunter Halsey # [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Brush 90

On arrival to plane crash in NE corner of air strip. Plane had heavy damage and active fire. Brush 90 pulled booster line and assisted E-90 with fire attack. Brush 90 was then cleared and sent back to staging.

Hunter Halsey
[REDACTED]

SEAN MCARDLE

MARTIN COUNTY FIRE RESCUE

[REDACTED]

-UPON ARRIVAL SAW FIRE UNIT APPLYING
WATER TO CRASH.

I ASSISTED TANKER 90 WITH WATER SUPPLY.

SEAN MCARDLE

[REDACTED]