



MEMORANDUM for RECORD

Ralph E. Hicks
Senior Air Safety Investigator, IIC
Eastern Region Aviation

Date: June 22, 2021
Witness Statement: Matt Lankford [REDACTED]
NTSB Accident Number: ERA21FA258 – Yulee, Florida

The following witness statement was provided by Mr. Lankford via telephone conversation.

- He was on the dock with his friends at Knucklehead's in St. Mary's.
- Jennifer Campbell called out the airplane first. They were standing on the dock and turned around to see it. He first saw the airplane when it was just feet above the surface.
- He observed the airplane completely nose down vertically and it was pointed straight at the water.....straight down.
- He first saw a large splash, then an "extremely loud boom" like a "cannon blast."
- He did not recall hearing the engine running, but it was probably 1,500 to 2,000 yards away and that may explain why he did not recall hearing it.
- They jumped into the boat and went out to help....called 911 immediately. At first the airplane floated for a few seconds, then it submerged and you could not see it any longer.
- They used a fish finder to locate the wreckage. There was lots of debris floating on the water, then an oil slick. They retrieved some items; a binder with flight papers, headset parts, and other items and handed them over to the first responders.

