



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Witness Statement

Lynn Spencer
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

Date: January 18, 2022
Person Contacted: Bruce Gammon, witness
Contact # [REDACTED]
NTSB Accident Number: ERA22LA107

Narrative:

The following is a summary of a conversation that occurred with the individual named above:

Mr. Bruce Gammon was contacted by phone on January 18, 2022, at 1027 EST. He was called at [REDACTED]. He provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED].

Mr. Gammon stated that the experience was very scary. He is from Canada, and he has rented a house in Lake Alfred every winter for the past five years. He is on the lake fishing five days per week. He is always alone on his boat, so he watches the seaplanes as they fly around and land on the lakes. He sees perhaps 20 of them per day, so he is very familiar with them and how they typically fly.

On the day of the accident, he was fishing in an area of the lake where he has had success. His boat was electronically anchored and facing into the wind. The accident airplane had flown one low pass over the lake and then circled to the right and come around for another low pass. They descended toward the lake, and they were very close to the water. Typically, the airplanes either land or do a low pass, but on the airplane's second pass, the right float gently touched the water and he saw the splash. This was odd to him because they touched the water but did not land. The airplane accelerated up and started veering to the right and made a big arc . . . it was accelerating into the wind. Yet, the airplane never came out of the arc. Normally, the airplanes accelerate up and they turn smoothly and this time it seemed like a steep angle...so steep that he was looking at the top of the airplane.

He stated that the airplane climbed to about a couple hundred feet as it arced, and at the apex of the arc, he could see the whole top of the airplane and it just continued downward. He no longer heard the motor when the airplane was descending. He thought, "Oh my god, he's not going to get out of this." He was thinking that the pilot must have known he was going to crash and that's why he pulled out the throttle because he knew he was going done . . . but the fact is simply that he did not hear the engine any longer as it descended.

He was so upset by the event that he could not function well after seeing the airplane crash, and his judgment of time was not good. He thought he had been on the phone with 911 for a long time, but it was only 5 minutes. He

had trouble opening up his phone and getting to the screen that would allow him to make a call. It's like his brain was no longer functioning. I explained that he was likely experiencing an adrenaline rush which impacted his perception of time and his ability to accomplish fine motor functions. "The impact was horrific, and I could not imagine anyone surviving." He was very pleased to hear that both occupants survived. He described that the airplane impacted almost straight vertically nose down, and the airplane stayed in that position for a short time, then the tail settled down toward the ground further.

Mr. Gammon stated that he was not registering every detail as the airplane climbed out, and that he really started to register details as things started to happen differently than he was used to. The bank was steeper than he was accustomed to, and that is when he started watching more closely and noted that they were coming down. It looked and sounded like it was gliding nose first. They measured and he was 400 feet from where the airplane came to rest. When the airplane descended, the right wing facing him. The airplane never got out of the arc . . . it was like a McDonalds arch.

When he got through to 911, he was able to explain that the accident occurred in an orange grove next to Lake Smart. He gave her his coordinates from his phone. He will send me the photos.

The call ended at 1047 EST.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on January 18, 2022. He replied on January 18, 2022, at 1601 EST with comments that were incorporated into the narrative. The corrected digest was e-mailed to him on January 19, 2022.