

N174A Accident Investigation

Inspector Statement

The FAA investigator, H. Ray Freeman, was notified of the accident via text at 22:48 (EDT) but did not see the message until 03:30 (EDT). The initial data included the accident location, police point of contact, pilot information, aircraft tail number, and the FAA Form 8020-9. I arrived on scene at approximately 0800. The accident location is a perimeter road for the Ocala International Airport at 2200 SW 67th Avenue Road in Ocala Florida. The accident scene was secured by the Ocala Police Department.

Upon arriving I made an initial assessment of hazards to determine what, if any, personal protective equipment would be required. Based on the localized nature of the blood in and around the cockpit I determined that only protective gloves would be required. I then determined that the scope of the scene was limited to the touchdown point on the road and continuous marks from that point to where the airplane came to rest.

I then began photographing and measuring the scene. The road is a two-lane road, oriented North/South approximately 450 meters west of runway 36 at Ocala International Airport (KOCF). The straight portion of that road is approximately 1000 meters (3280 feet) long. At the north and south end of that straight portion the road turns to the west. There are light poles lining the east side of the road that are approximately 30 feet tall and approximately 15 feet east of the road. The west side of the road is a sod area, with a gentle slope to the west, between the road and a tree line approximately 25 meters (82 feet) wide. There are power poles along that tree line approximately 30 feet tall.

The initial impact markings are approximately 645 meters (2116 feet) south of the road bend on the north end. This is significant as the pilot was attempting to land to the south. Had the landing been successful the pilot would have had approximately 350 meters (1148 feet) to get the aircraft stopped.

The initial impact markings indicated that the Cessna 182 touched down hard on the west edge of the roadway with the nose gear collapsing immediately after touchdown. The nose wheel separated and was found along the east tree line approximately 100 feet east of the plane. Approximately 9 feet after the initial touchdown markings there is evidence of the aircraft prop striking the edge of the roadway. The aircraft slid to a stop on the west side of the road approximately 85 meters (278 feet) from the initial impact markings.

After documenting and measuring the peripheral area of the scene I closed in to get closer pictures of the aircraft exterior and cabin. There was some debris located outside the

plane primarily from the initial responders extricating the pilot from the wreckage. The pilot's seat back, headset case, wheel chocks, paper towels, jumper cables, and several pieces of Plexiglas windshield were among the items on the ground outside the plane. Crime scene tape was placed on the aircraft by the Ocala Police Department.

The cockpit was in disarray due to the extrication of the pilot. I was able to find the aircraft registration, insurance document, and a weight and balance document in the pouch located just forward of the pilot side door. The airworthiness certificate and Pilot Operating Handbook were not found in the plane. Standard items were scattered around the cockpit including but not limited to glasses, pens, headsets, GPS cables, an old airport facility directory, and a hat. All switch positions and aircraft instruments were photographed.

The damage to the outside of the plane was largely limited to the propeller and front fuselage area between the prop and the cockpit. The windshield was shattered and blood present from the injuries to the pilot. Substantial damage occurred to the structure from the engine aft. The three prop blades were all curled to the rear. There was some damage to the outboard end (leading edge) of the left wing and some sheet metal wrinkling on the top of the left wing. The right wing appeared undamaged.

I checked the fuel caps on both wing tanks, and they were both secure. There was fuel present in the tanks, but I was unable to determine how much fuel was remaining while on scene due to the attitude of the plane and tools available.

Upon completion of the on-scene documentation, I drove over to meet with airport authority personnel at Ocala International Airport. I met with the Airport Operations and Facilities Manager, Michael Baker. The primary reason for meeting with him was to determine if there were any airport cameras that could provide video or still images of the accident aircraft. There were no images or videos of the aircraft. Additionally, Michael mentioned that he received a call from the pilot's wife, Mrs. Adkins, inquiring about the status of the aircraft. I called her and she asked if she could look for her husband's wallet in the wreckage. I met her at the accident scene, and we were unable to locate the wallet.

I spoke with Mrs. Adkins to inquire about the extent of his injuries. She notified me that he was in the hospital with serious injuries and would require surgery for broken bones. She told me that he was awake and alert and that I could speak to him if I needed to. I met Mrs. Adkins at the HCA hospital in Ocala and spoke with Mr. Adkins and his son. The conversation was not extremely detailed as I was unsure of the medications and mental state of the individual.

He told me that he was selling the plane after a four-year refurbishment project and wanted to take it out for one more flight. He departed Apopka (X04) that morning and made a

refueling stop in Palatka (28J). He departed Palatka for Apopka and became disoriented. As night fell, he was unable to determine his location. He felt like he was running out of fuel and that he needed to find a place to land in a location where he wouldn't cause injury to people or property on the ground. He saw the road and thought it would be a safe place to attempt to land. He said he never saw the runway at Ocala International Airport despite flying 175 meters (575 feet) west of the runway to reverse course and land on the road. I asked him if he had his pilot certificate and medical certificate for me to look at and he said he couldn't find his wallet and that his medical certificate had expired.

After the brief discussion with the pilot and family, I departed the hospital and called the NTSB representative, Joshua Young, to discuss initial findings and document sharing procedures. The investigation is ongoing.

HERSCHEL RAY
FREEMAN JR

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