



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Michael Huhn
Air Safety Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Date: February 23, 2017
Person Contacted: Mr. Alex Athens (Eyewitness)
Airplane Registration Number: N3803J

Narrative:

The following is a synopsis of the information provided by Mr. Athens in a telephone conversation on this date:

- Mr. Athens was in/at his hangar and heard the airplane taking off/approaching, so he turned to watch the airplane
 - The engine sound indicated to him that it was not a trainer, but a larger, more substantial airplane
- His hangar is the "far south" one, which abuts the parallel taxiway
- The engine sounded normal, which he elaborated as "strong and loud" and "ear piercing loud"
- The airplane was departing from runway 12
- Runway 12 has a "substantial" uphill slope, and the terrain and trees also rise in that direction
- The witness stated that "nobody takes off on runway 12" unless there is a very significant headwind favoring that runway
- He flies a Cessna 206 and a Cessna 180 from the airport, and in his more than 10 years there he has never taken off on runway 12
- At the time, there was a "quartering tailwind" from the "northwest" of about 15 knots
- The wind sock was "full mast" meaning it was projecting straight out due to the wind
- The airplane just broke ground as it passed abeam of his hangar
- He then mentioned to his colleague at the hangar to watch the airplane, because it was going to be somewhat abnormal/interesting
- The airplane achieved a maximum altitude of about 50 ft agl, and then began a "steep right descending turn"
- The right wingtip struck the ground first; it exhibited a brief flash of fire which quickly disappeared
 - The airplane struck the ground about 100 feet from the side of the runway, approximately across the runway from the windsock

- The debris path was about 100 to 150 feet long, and included landing gear and wing tip tank fragments
- The pilot told the witness that:
 - o He and his wife (passenger) were bound for New Orleans, and
 - o He had had previous problems with the turbocharger system