

Inspector statement – Rod Ziegler

Event - N7243T accident, July 27, 2017, 2055 local, Enumclaw, WA

Site arrival July 28, 2017 0800 local

Friday morning I (ROZ) was dispatched from the SEA-FSDO to go to the scene of an aircraft accident in Enumclaw, WA. I was accompanied by Chris Melchior, SEA FSDO Operations Inspector (CMM).

We found the aircraft on its nose, tail in the air, at Rainier Trails Park, approximately 155 yards to the East of the Enumclaw Airport runway.

The area was secured and monitored by the Enumclaw PD.

There were airplane wheel tracks through the grass on the NE end of the runway, an indication that the aircraft had departed the runway paved surface before it tried to clear the cyclone/barbed wire fence at the east end of the runway.

The aircraft came to rest in the park adjacent to a 6 foot berm and there were some indications on the ground that the aircraft was displaced from the original impact on top of the berm to the lower ground north east of the berm next to the playground equipment. The propeller was separated from the aircraft. The engine prop flange was still bolted to the propeller. The descending blade was still imbedded in the turf. The ascending blade was relatively undamaged. The propeller was 23' 5" to the southwest of the airplane.

The aircraft was facing in the westerly direction. The nose gear was broken and pushed up and to the right. The engine was pushed back into the firewall.

People in the area were chatting that the aircraft went through the barbed wire on the fence at the east end of the runway and crashed in the park but an off duty air traffic controller, Jeff Enticknap, who lives in a house adjacent to the east of the park said he saw the aircraft fly eastbound over the park then his house at tree-top level making a slightly left turn after crossing over his house. He went in the house to talk to his wife and heard the aircraft return. By the sound it returned, flying low over his house at what sounded like a high power setting. The sound of the crash immediately followed. He also stated that it is unusual for aircraft to approach the runway over his house at full power. Usually aircraft descend to the runway threshold at a low power setting when landing to the west. It is usual practice at the Enumclaw Airport to land to the west. This was verified by the airport manager, Randy Petite.

The aircraft had two strands of barbed wire wrapped from nose to tail and back to nose. The barbed wire passed between the inboard end of the right elevator control surface and the tail cone.

There was leaf and tree debris on the street between the runway and the park indicating that something passed through the trees shredding leaves and twigs. The top tube of the cyclone fence was found between the park and the runway. It was bent. The fence at the east end of the runway had cyclone fence fabric depressed at the same spacing as the left, right, and nose wheel lateral spacing indicating the wheels of the airplane contacted the top of the cyclone fence and took the barbed wire along as the plane passed over the fence.

It also seems that as the plane departed the airport grounds and over the road it dragged the barbed wire with it, trailing it through the trees and tearing out leaf and twigs that were found on the street at the south margin of the park.

I believe the airplane made it over the park and the adjacent houses to the east but was having difficulty and decided to circle back to the airport for a westerly landing. In the struggle back to the runway the pilot was not able to maintain altitude and crashed in the park 155 yards short of the runway.

The aft fuselage is wrinkled showing compression on the right side.

There were 40 degrees of flaps deployed. The mixture and throttle were set at full rich and max power. Hobbs time 1041.7, tach time 772.51 hours.

Witnesses say the aircraft was doing touch & go practice during the hour preceding the crash. The Last eastbound touchdown on the runway before the crash was approximately 80% down the runway. There were main tire skid marks starting at this point on the runway. The marks on the runway and grass

Inspector statement – Rod Ziegler

Event - N7243T accident, July 27, 2017, 2055 local, Enumclaw, WA

Site arrival July 28, 2017 0800 local

suggest the pilot attempted to “go-around” aborting the landing eastbound, failed to clear the fence and caught the barbed wire on top of the fence.

Identification of parts and accessories:

Propeller EM 7654

Cessna 172A, s/n 46843

The rest of the accessories are pressed into the mangled cowling so that identification was not possible on site.

One bystander said the aircraft was maintained at the Enumclaw Airport, fuselage painting was planned, the aircraft had a recent annual, and the owner keeps the airplane in an open hangar at this airport.