

Inspector's Statement: Kelly Bosch

NTSB#: WPR18TA234

N7300M

On August 21, at approximately 0930, the GL21 Office Manager was notified about an accident involving an aerial applicator north of Grand Forks, ND. ASI Perry Ochsner and I were dispatched to the scene arriving at approximately 1145 local time.

The accident scene was located approximately 5-3/4 miles NE of the Grand Forks airport or just NW of the corner of 70th Ave N and Columbia Road.

When we first arrived we spoke with Andrew Cashin of the ND State Patrol. Officer Cashin briefed us on the details of the situation. He stated the pilot had been trapped in the aircraft due to his left leg being wedged between controls and the firewall. The fire department/EMS were able to free the trapped foot and remove the pilot from the aircraft. Officer Cashin gave us the name and phone number of Lauri Shimps, who was an eye witness to the accident.

We also spoke with James Knox, the Chief Supervisor for the aerial application company, Agrimax/Ross Seed Company. Mr. Knox did not have a lot of information regarding the amount of chemical on board, time of departure from the airport, or anything else regarding the flight since the aircraft was working out of the East Grand Forks location and Mr. Knox is located Fisher, MN.

After surveying and taking pictures of the crash site and aircraft, ASI Ochsner and I made a visit to Lauri Shimps residence. Mrs. Shimps told us that she had been walking her dog(s) that morning and had been watching the aircraft make spray passes to the field just to the East of the crash site. She mentioned that when the pilot made the final turn it did not seem as "graceful" as the others and that just before impact, she noticed what appeared to be a puff of smoke or liquid coming from the aircraft. Since she was quite a distance off from the aircraft it was difficult to say for sure. Mrs. Shimps phoned 911 and began making her way to the crash site as she is a nurse and wanted to assist the pilot any way that she could. She also mentioned that in the final turn, she didn't notice anything out of the ordinary as far as engine noise and that it sounded about the same as it did while making all the previous turns.