



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Office of Aviation Safety
Western Pacific Region

February 10, 2019

ONSITE EXAMINATION NOTES

WPR19FA083

A. ACCIDENT

Location: Walnut Creek, CA
Date: February 8, 2019
Aircraft: N3270F
NTSB IIC: Albert Nixon

B. EXAMINATION PARTICIPANTS:

Albert Nixon
Senior Aviation Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Federal Way, WA

Michael Hicks
Aviation Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Los Angeles, CA

Dave Vickers
Aviation Safety Inspector
Federal Aviation Administration
Oakland, CA

C. SUMMARY

Examination of the airplane wreckage was conducted on February 10, 2019, at the accident site near Mount Diablo, California. No evidence of preimpact mechanical failure or malfunction was noted during the examination of the airframe and engine.

D. DETAILS OF THE INVESTIGATION

1.0 WRECKAGE AND IMPACT INFORMATION

Examination of the accident site revealed that the airplane impacted terrain about 1/2 mile southwest of the Mount Diablo Peak, Diablo, California, at an elevation of about 2,846 ft. All major components of the airplane were contained within the debris trail. Wreckage debris was scattered about 100 ft from the main wreckage. The first identified point of contact was a large area of disturbed dirt and broken trees and vegetation about 10 ft by 25 ft in size and about 100 ft from the main wreckage. Ground scars and flattened vegetation were observed emanating from this area of disturbed dirt to the area where the main fuselage came to rest. The airplane came to rest upright in heavy vegetation and trees about 6 ft in height and on a mountain slope of about 30°. There was a post impact fire mostly contained in the cabin area.



Figure 1: Airplane wreckage viewed from the aft side being prepared for recovery.

The fuselage came to rest on a heading of about 113° magnetic. The left wing remained attached and the right wing was separated. The empennage was separated from the fuselage about 3 ft from the leading edge of the horizontal stabilizer. Flight control continuity was unable to be established due to impact damage and airplane position on the hill.

The right wing's leading edge exhibited aft crushing on the outboard span. The right flap partially separated and was buckled underneath the wing. The right aileron was attached and was wrinkled. The right main fuel tank was breached. The right wing was separated about and bent aft about 90° about 3 ft from outboard tip.

The left wing's leading edge exhibited 2 circular impact damage impressions on the outboard half. The top portion of the wing exhibited a large opening about 2 ft by 11/2 ft near the wing root and towards the trailing edge. The left flap remained attached and was retracted. The left aileron was attached. The fuel cap remained attached. The left fuel tank was breached, and no fuel was observed in the tank. The left main gear was retracted but the tire was consumed by fire. The left wing's tip was separated.

The empennage was relatively intact. The vertical stabilizer and rudder were attached to their respective attachment points. The left horizontal stabilizer and elevator. The right horizontal stabilizer and elevator remained attached.

The instrument control panel and cabin area were substantially damaged from fire and unreadable. The top of the cabin was destroyed from thermal damage. The right cabin door was open.

1 personal electronic device (iPhone) was discovered in the airplane. A pilot's bag was also found near the wreckage. The bag contained the pilot's logbook.

The engine remained attached and was bent about 45° to the right of the fuselage heading. The two-bladed propeller separated as was found about 30 ft from the front of the airplane. One of the separated blades exhibited leading edge and chordwise paint erosion. The other separated blade was relatively intact. The propeller spinner was crushed aft around the hub.

The oil filter cap remained attached to the filler neck. The oil quantity indicated full.

The airplane wreckage was recovered to a secure facility for further examination.

Submitted by: Albert Nixon