



Joshua Cawthra
Senior Aviation Accident Investigator
Office of Aviation Safety - Western Pacific Region

Date: June 22, 2022

Subject: WPR22FA216 - Witness Statements

Justin Colbert
[REDACTED] - Porterville Airport Field Service
Date of Interview: 6/19/22

During an in-person conversation, Mr. Colbert reported that he was at the helipad on the northeast side of the airport when he observed the accident airplane depart runway 30. Mr. Colbert stated that the airplane was about 75 ft above the ground over the runway when it made a sharp left 180° turn and parallel the runway until about the approach end of runway 30, when it turned to more of an east-southeast direction. Mr. Colbert reported that at the time of takeoff, the airplane sounded normal.

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Richard Palmquist
[REDACTED]
Date of Interview: 6/20/2022

During a telephone conversation, Mr. Palmquist reported that while traveling north on highway 65, and did not witness the accident, however, a passenger in his car saw a wheel traveling in a nearby field shortly after hearing a loud bang.

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Danny Warren -

[REDACTED]

Date of Interview: 6/20/2022

During a telephone conversation, Mr. Warren stated he was located on the east side of the field working on a tractor. He mentioned that he's always looking up when airplanes are flying and recalled that he saw the accident airplane flying over earlier that morning. Mr. Warren said the airplane was traveling from the southeast direction, and he heard the airplane coming near his position, when he saw the airplane in a fairly steep descent and recalled thinking "what the heck he's doing." Mr. Warren said that he could hear an engine at a high RPM, wings were level, going straight, in a steep descent. Right before it hit the ground, maybe 60 ft above ground level, it seemed like the pilot "cut the engines". Mr. Warren said that the airplane then hit the ground, followed by a cloud of dust followed by a fire ball, and that it hit the ground in the same angle it was descending in, and the pilot didn't appear to try and recover. He estimated the impact angle was 45 degrees nose down or steeper.

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Shane Crew

[REDACTED]

Date of Interview: 6/20/2022

During a telephone conversation, Mr. Crew reported he was about 1 mile or so out of Tera Bella, saw a blue airplane. He stated that when he heard/saw him, the engines were running at a high rpm. Mr. Crew said that when he saw the airplane coming back around to the north, thought that was weird. Shortly after, he observed smoke in the distance. He added that the engines did sound like they were at a higher RPM, propellers weren't "breaking the sound barrier."

Joshua Cawthra

From: Tyler Rossi [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 5, 2022 10:26 PM
To: Cawthra Joshua
Subject: Re: WPR22FA216 - Statement

[CAUTION] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click any links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Of course, my name is Tyler Rossi. I'm a flight instructor in Bakersfield, CA. On June 18, at approximately 2:30-2:45pm, I overheard a few radio transmissions on a CTAF that was 122.8 from an aircraft dealing with some issues. I do not remember the tail number but I remember that the pilot was approximately 7 miles south of Porterville as he called out. He asked if anyone else was on Porterville's frequency and no one answered, because no one was around there. He reached out again and asked if anyone was on frequency at all, and someone replied. He explained that he was dealing with some issues with his aircraft and that he had lost "almost all pitch control" of his aircraft. The person who replied asked if he could give him Bakersfield Approach's frequency which was 120.5 for the Porterville area. When I overheard about this issue over the radio I looked at my ADS-B traffic and noticed an aircraft on the map that matched the location that was called out. The pilot of the aircraft said that he was headed towards Porterville and that "I'm pretty sure I'll be able to land at Porterville Airport". I cycled through 120.5 and 121.5 to check if there was anything else said but I didn't hear anything. The "quotes" that I heard are the most exact that I can remember from what I heard. Over the radio he seemed relatively calm and composed so I don't think I grasped the severity of the situation. Only a few transmissions were heard, shortly after that I called out to anyone that was listening if there was an update and I received no reply. I hope this is helpful.

-Tyler Rossi

Sent from my iPhone