

Paul Rho
Air Safety Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Date: August 1, 2023

Subject: WPR23LA259 / Witness Statement

Contact: Jake Bertelsen, husband of the model, photographer [REDACTED]
[REDACTED])

Kellys Incident 6/24/23

Kelly and I were doing a shoot in the dry lake bed outside of Las Vegas. Ralph Goodwater did a few big loops around the lake bed in his plane while we were shooting and then landed near where our corvette rental car was parked. He walked up to us, said he was a photographer, and asked us if we wanted to shoot any photos by his plane. We went over to his plane and did a photoshoot there. We got some photos in front of the plane and shot photos of Kelly topless behind the propeller. Ralph said she could do some photos inside the plane with the harness covering her nipples. She got in the cockpit and I took some photos on my camera and Ralph took some photos on his cell phone. He then said that if we wanted we could shoot some pictures of him flying by Kelly. He showed us a picture on his Instagram of what he was talking about where he flew his plane over other models. He said the photo was featured in maxim. He also showed us another picture of a fly by that looked cool and we said yes. He gave us his business card, told us to tag him in the photos if we posted them, and took off in his plane. I got into position and he did the first fly by. He did another loop and flew by again and I got some more photos. I looked at the pictures I had taken and Kelly was looking at the plane as it flew by. I told her on the next one to look at me and the pictures would be better. On the third loop I got into position about 20 feet in front of Kelly and she was looking at me and posing with her right hand behind her head. The plane was in the same position with the wing tip tilted down but this time the plane was way too close and much lower. A portion of the plane, a part at the very tip of the wing hit Kelly in the back of the head. Because of how fast the plane was going when it hit her head I thought she was going to be dead for sure. I threw my camera down and went running up to her. The back of her scalp was peeled off. Her eyes were open and she was breathing but not responsive. I felt the back of her head and her skull was not smashed in like I thought it would be. I put the portion of scalp flapped

over back onto her head. Ralph landed his plane and came running up saying he was so sorry over and over. I told him to calm down and that we needed to get her to a hospital. I said we need to wrap her head to stop the bleeding and he ran and grabbed an absorbent pad from the plane. I put that on her head and I wrapped my shirt around her head. I asked if he could fly her in his plane to the hospital and he said yes. We loaded her into the plane and I asked him how long it would take to get her to the hospital. He said over 20 mins. I told him I could get her there faster by car. I asked Ralph to grab my camera and I took Kelly to the car. We put her in the car and I drove her to the hospital.

Ralph sent me messages on his Instagram and I told him what hospital we were at. At the first hospital two officers came and one of them took my statement. He asked to see Ralphs instagram. He saved the picture on his phone of Ralph flying his plane over the other models that Ralph had shown us. My friend Jesse came and met us at the hospital to help us. Ralph came to the hospital and apologized for hitting her. He cried and said he was so sorry. While talking he said two weird things. He said that we was not doing a fly by when he hit Kelly, he was coming in for landing. This was weird because he was flying by just like he did in the two previous fly bys, and the plane was in the exact same position as the other fly bys. He also said that it wasn't the tip of the wing that hit her head. This was weird because I watched the tip of the wing hit her head very hard. I didn't question him because I had pictures of the incident on my camera, and I had pictures of him flying by Kelly in the previous fly bys that I reviewed. After Ralph left the hospital Jesse said when Ralph and his wife showed up she was saying some weird things outside the hospital. He said it seemed like Ralphs wife was trying to get Jesse to say "Kelly was okay", but this was even before Kelly had gotten her head stitched up and she was far from okay.

While at the hospital I realized that Kellys large ring she was wearing on her hand was missing the big stone from the center of it. I also realized that her hand was behind her head when the wing tip hit her. The ring was also dented in the very center of it. We realized that miraculously the ring had acted as a shield that stopped the wing tip from slicing through her skull. Without it she would have been dead. It also stopped her index, middle, and ring finger from shattering like her pinky did. But her pinky was severely shattered by the wing tip and almost ripped off, and her scalp was ripped open.

The next day after breakfast I decided to grab my camera to review the pictures I had taken of the incident. I found that Ralph had stolen my memory cards out of my camera when I was taking Kelly to the car. My heart sank. I sent Ralph a text and asked him to return them and he denied taking the memory cards. The only two people who touched the camera besides me were Ralph and my friend Jesse who helped us unload the rental car, picked us up from the hospital, and let us stay at his house that night. He would have never taken them. Also the camera had two memory cards that it wrote to

simultaneously and a camera cage to protect it when it fell. I went online and checked his instagram and he had taken it down. I sent him a text message about why he took it down he had a story about how everything bad in his life was related to photography. When I asked for pictures of the other fly bys he said he didn't know what I was talking about. He has since put his instagram back up but he removed the pictures of the other fly bys he showed us. After realizing he wasn't going to return the memory cards and the texts he sent me, we decided we had to get an attorney right away because he wasn't dealing with things with integrity.

When I checked my video on my Rayban Stories I was wearing during the incident, I realized that I had accidentally pushed the record button and taken two videos. One after we had loaded Kelly into the plane, and the other as I was getting in the car and driving off. I reviewed my phone photos and found a screenshot I took with the flyby picture he had shown us that I had saved when the officer asked me to show him Ralphs instagram. The officer also sent me the same picture he had saved on his phone from Ralphs instagram. I went online and found the photographer that shot the photo Ralph showed us, his name is Brennan. I reached out on instagram and had a friend introduce me to him. I talked to him and told him what had happened. He confirmed that it was Ralph who did the fly by in his shoot. He also gave us a slow motion video from that photoshoot that shows Ralph flying very low to the ground and then pulling up at the last second as he wizzed over the heads of the other models. We then did a reverse image search of the tail number of the plane and found the photographer that had taken the other picture that Ralph showed us of the fly bys he had done. This photographer posted the photo on their twitter @TheEdgelImage. In the caption they said, "During a recent shoot out in the wilderness, a plane just happened to do a flyover and then stopped to get a piece of the photo fun. I'm not sure it would have stopped if it wasn't for Juls looking pure (Fire emoji). If anyone else fancies a shoot with the plane let me know." We also found a picture by David J. Crewe that was insanely frightening after what Ralph did to Kelly. In this photo Ralph flies his plane very low and it looks like he's turning right into the naked model standing who's standing in the desert looking at the photographer. If we had seen this photo, or Brennans video before our fly bys there's no way we would have agreed to the shoot. In all the photos we found online of the fly bys, Ralphs plane was in the exact same position as it was when it hit Kelly in the head. After our search we realized that this seemed to be his thing. It seemed like he liked to use his plane as a means to hang out with cute models, dry lakebeds is where where he met them and he enjoyed the thrill of flying his plane dangerously close to them.

I am sharing the google drive folder with you that has all of the videos and photos that we have relating to the incident. My Rayban story footage is in there and the video that Brennan shared with us is also in the folder along with everything dealing with the officer at the hospital and Ralph's texts after the incident. Each of the photos is labeled

with a description and items are organized into folders. It should come as a separate email, please let me know if you don't get it.

Please let me know if you need anything else or have any questions,
Thank you,

Jake

Jake Bertelsen

Owner/Artist

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1:55 PM · Oct 31, 2021

Photo 1 – Photos of accident airplane in pervious photo shoot (courtesy of photographer)

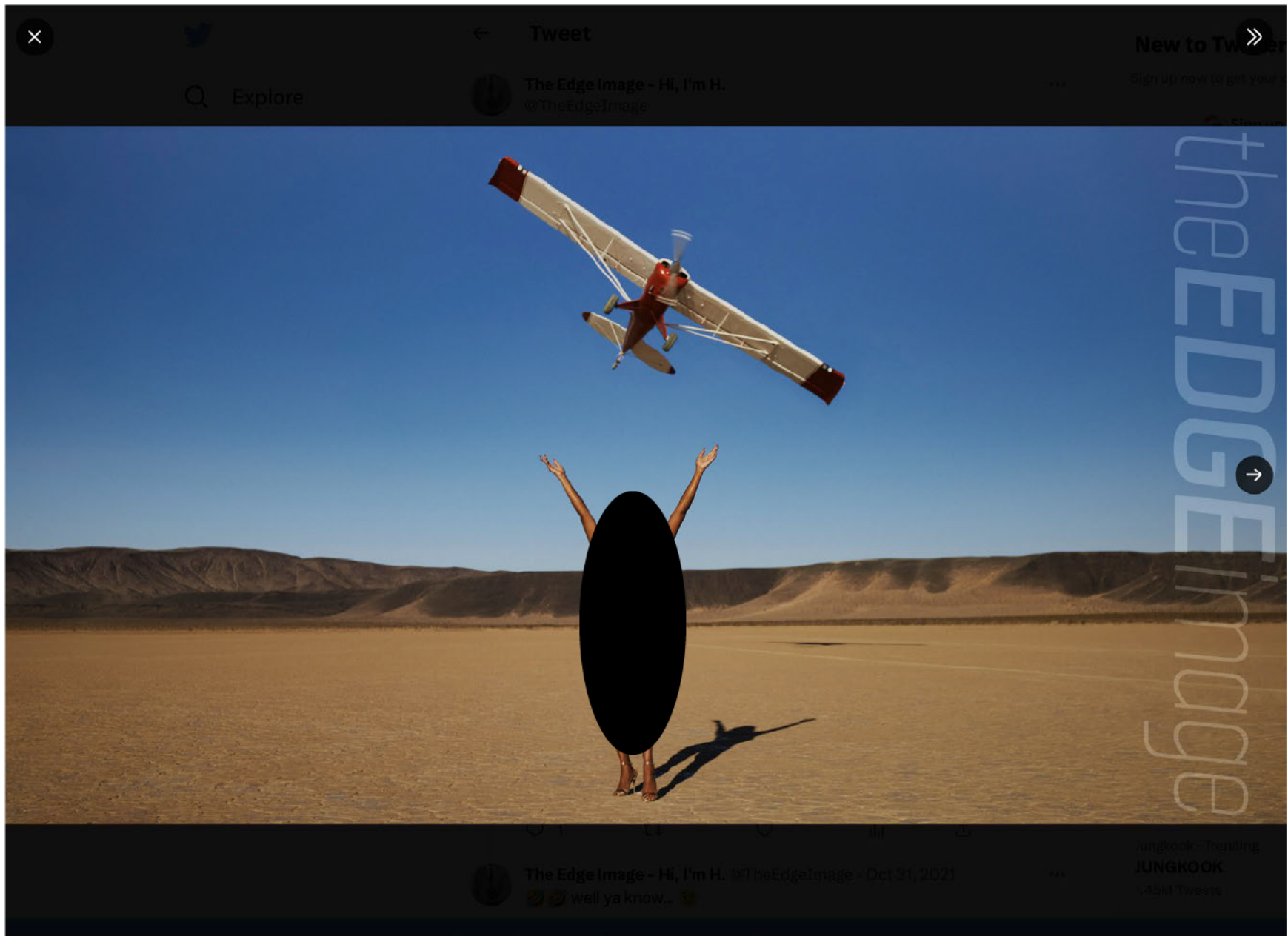


Photo 2 - Photos of accident airplane in pervious photo shoot (courtesy of photographer)



David J. Crewe Commercial Photography



2,500 × 1,600

Photo 3 - Photos of accident airplane in pervious photo shoot (courtesy of photographer)

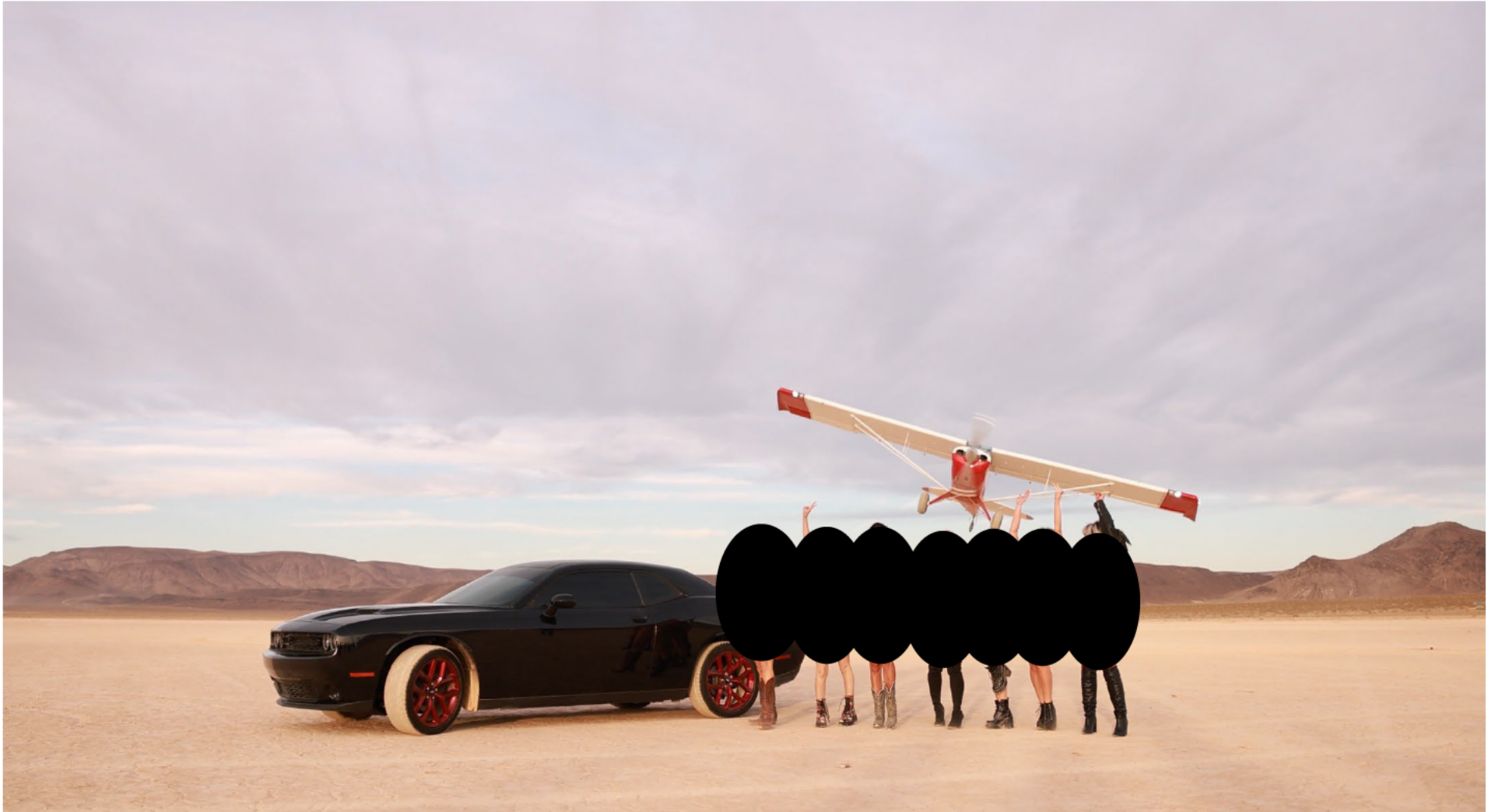


Photo 4 - Photos of accident airplane in pervious photo shoot (courtesy of photographer)

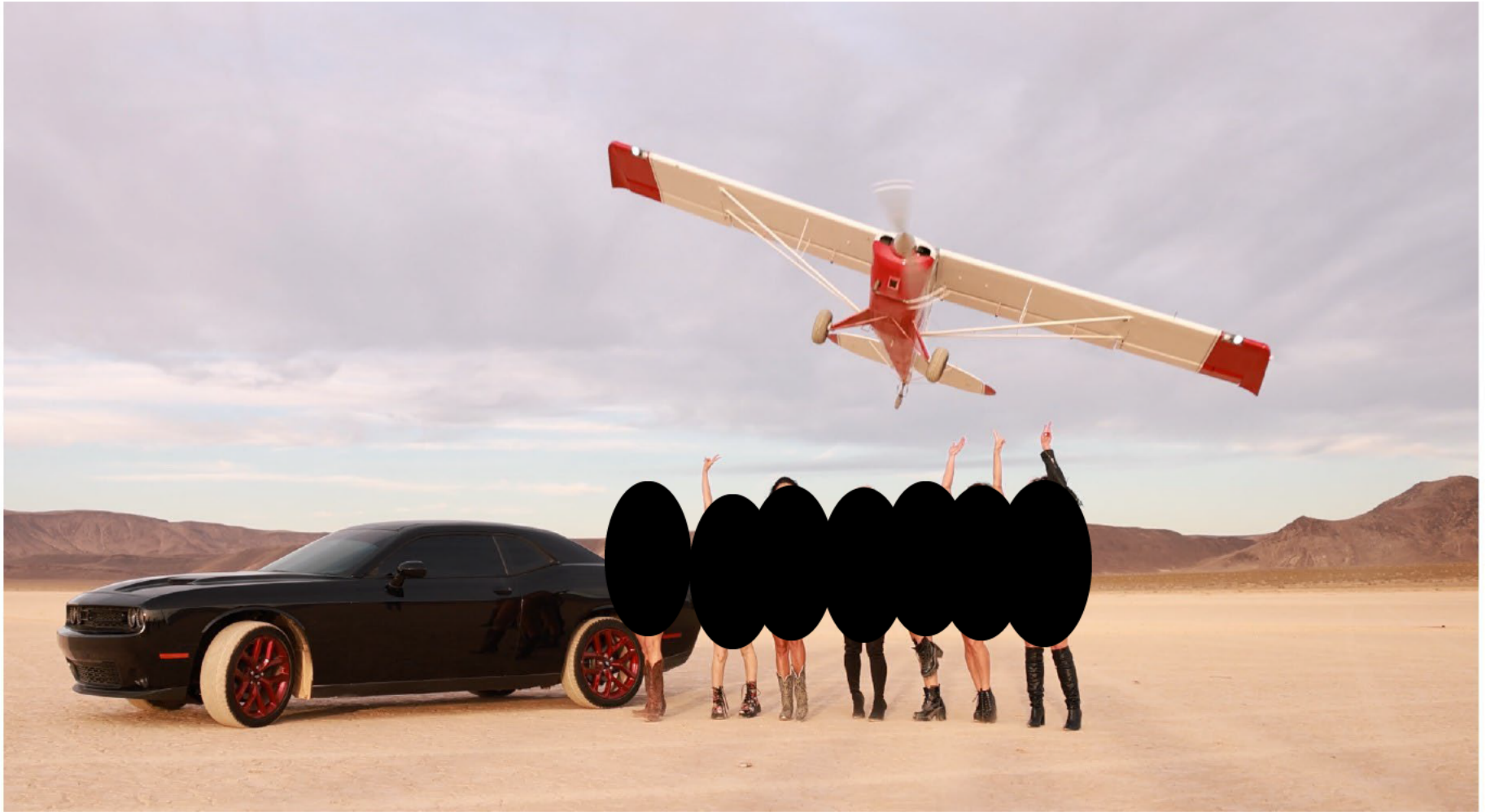


Photo 5 - Photos of accident airplane in pervious photo shoot (courtesy of photographer)