

ZOË KELIHER
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Office of Aviation Safety – Western Pacific Region

All persons listed were interviewed by NTSB personnel:

The following is a summary of conversation:

MIKE PORT

Mr. Port stated that he had known the pilot for several years. The pilot would normally stay the summers in Alaska and fly south visiting friends before going back to his home base in Arizona. He stated that the pilot would stay with him for a few days because he was close to the Canadian border. He thought the pilot departed Anchorage to Petersburg and then after spending a night there, he departed about 0900 to head to Twist. He had an uneventful trip.

When the pilot arrived everything was normal and the pilot appeared in good spirits. They ate dinner and the pilot planned to leave on Monday (October 2). He thought the pilot would be going to Redding after leaving his place. Although they were friends, he did not know much about his personal life.

Mr. Port further stated that he assisted the pilot emptying his external fuel bladder, but did not think the pilot added more fuel from his tanks because the battery was not hooked up. He did recall that the pilot was troubleshooting the heat and had the left cheek off of the nose cowlings, but did not recall him doing any other maintenance.

RICK BALAM

Mr. Balam, the Sheriff, stated that the first responders did not turn the fuel off.

CHAD PATTERSON

Mr. Patterson stated that he and the accident pilot planned on flying together that day; they both owned the same make/model of airplane and were friends. The pilot was staying at Mr. Port's residence where there was a private airstrip. Mr. Patterson landed in the morning and they departed shortly thereafter. The pilot indicated he had refueled and had about 10 gallons of Avgas onboard. After departing, Mr. Patterson flew directly to a hillside to the east of the airstrip that he had landed on before. About 5-10 minutes into the flight he landed on a slope to the west of a tree. He communicated to the pilot over the radio that he should land in between his airplane and a tree that was located to the east. Mr. Patterson maneuvered his airplane so he was facing downslope and could watch the pilot land.

Mr. Patterson further stated the pilot made two low passes over the landing area performing a reconnaissance over the ridge. He observed the airplane touchdown on the slope further to the east of his location and made the same upslope landing. The pilot appeared to abort the landing and after a short landing roll, the airplane became airborne again. The airplane then appeared to collide with a large rock and the airplane's left landing-gear fold under the fuselage. The continued over the ridge to the east (the presumed bail-out path and he lost sight. He asked the pilot over the radio if he was okay, the pilot replied "I'm flying, but I'm having problems." The pilot stayed on the microphone and he heard him scream. Mr. Patterson call 911 and then flew around looking for the airplane, but didn't see the wreckage until flying back.

DAWN MARIE SHURLOW (FAA)

Thank you for speaking with me today regarding Mr. Vanyo. I was an Aviation Safety Inspector (ASI) with the St. Louis Flight Standards District Office (FSDO) that was assigned to investigate a pilot deviation involving Mr. Vanyo on September 27, 2022, Traffic Mandatory Occurrence Report, SUS-M-2022/09/27-003. The investigation proved that Mr. Vanyo had flown his aircraft (N56DV) and had manipulated the transponder read out to report N56XC (his former aircraft) instead of N56DV. While tracking the ADS-B for the flight, it was discovered that once N56XC landed in Glendale Arizona (KGEU), the read out changed to N56DV. This was one of the ways, along with signed fuel purchase receipts and witness statements, I determined that it was Mr. Vanyo's aircraft N56DV and that Mr. Vanyo was operating the aircraft. During the investigation it came to light that Mr. Vanyo had been flying on a denied medical for a known brain injury.

JOHN FROST (FRIEND)

Mr. Frost stated that he stayed with the pilot in Alaska, although he didn't fly with him. The pilot enjoyed landing on short and scenic strips and would often take pictures of himself at these locations. In early September, the pilot assisted hunters in the Brooks Range, landing on gravel bars and other off-airport sites. He flew frequently, averaging five days a week when weather permitted.

On September 28, the pilot left his house and flew nearly non-stop to Petersburg, Alaska, which took about 11 hours. After staying overnight, he continued to Twisp, Washington, around the 29th. The pilot left some personal items with Mr. Frost, including a propeller. Throughout the summer, the pilot had been flying with a Catto climb prop (86 inches and 38-degree pitch). The propeller he left at Mr. Frost's house was a climb propeller, so at the time of the accident, he was likely using his cruise prop. Mr. Frost noted that the approach would have been a few knots faster with the cruise propeller, although the climb propeller offered better performance.