



Air Tractor, Inc.
Accident Investigation

FIELD NOTES

NTSB Accident Number:

WPR24FA238

Date & Location of Accident:

7/10/24
Helena, MT

NTSB REQUESTED CONFIDENTIAL:

The information contained in this report is produced for the sole purpose of providing observations and information to the NTSB and/or FAA during an active accident investigation. No entity may release or share this information prior to its inclusion in the NTSB's public docket without the express written consent of Air Tractor, Inc.

PREPARED BY:

██████████
Air Tractor, Inc.

FACTUAL INFORMATION

N10122

AIRCRAFT:

AT-802A manufactured in 2013
802A-0495
N10122

DATE & TIME:

07/10/24
~12:10 local (GMT)

INJURIES:

Fatal

LOCATION:

Approx. 10 miles east of Helena, MT
N 46.66547° W -111.80897° (Crash site)

PILOT:

[REDACTED]

OPERATOR:

Dauntless Air
50 W Sorenson Ave,
Appleton, MN 56208

NTSB INVESTIGATOR:

Tealeye Cornejo
Aviation Accident Investigator (WPR)
National Transportation Safety Board
32125 32nd Ave South, Suite 140
Federal Way, WA 98001
cornejt@ntsb.gov

INSURANCE:

Not Recorded

FAA INVESTIGATOR:

Tracy Brendal
Helena FSDO

SALVAGE:

Inter-State Aviation Inc.
Pullman-Moscow Regional Airport
Pullman, WA 99163

OTHER CONTACTS:

[REDACTED]
US Forest Service
Fort Collins, CO
[REDACTED]

OTHER CONTACTS:

Brett LEsperance
Dauntless Air
Appleton, MN
[REDACTED]

OTHER CONTACTS:

Martin Holte
Fire Boss
South St. Paul, MN
[REDACTED]

OTHER CONTACTS:



Example of AT-802 Fire Boss

The information contained in this report is the result of traveling to the accident scene on 7/11/24 and a wreckage examination at Inter-State Aviation, Inc on 8/21/24 under the supervision of the NTSB IIC Tealeye Cornejo. The wreckage examination was conducted after the aircraft had been recovered from the accident scene by the salvage company.

Also present during the on-scene investigation and/or present at the wreckage exam was Kristyn Blocker and Zane Brown of the NTSB, Tracy Brendal of the FAA, Brett L' Esperance and Richard Simpson of Dauntless Air, Martin Holte of Wipaire/Fire Boss, William Pandis of the Lewis and Clark County Sheriffs Department, Dave Serena, Mike Savage, Lea Weinkauf, Eric Shanbora, and Ward Huston of the US Forestry Service, and Nick Miller and Dakota Lowe of Air Tractor.

This report is subject to revision as additional information becomes available. The intent of this report is to provide details relating to the investigation of the subject accident. This report is not to be shared with any person outside the scope of this official investigation.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS OF WRECKAGE AND ACCIDENT SITE:

Arrival at the accident site was approximately 3:30 pm on 7/11/24. The wreckage was located submerged in the Missouri river approximately 10 miles east of Helena, MT. The main wreckage of N10122 was located submerged near a rock faced shoreline. The Wipaire floats were separated from the main wreckage. The propeller hub with 3 attached propellers was found separated from the main wreckage and laying closer to the shoreline submerged in water.



Shoreline Rockface and Debris

Further observation of the wreckage was conducted at approximately 3:00 pm on 7/12/24 after the wreckage crew moved the aircraft to shore.



Main Wreckage

A wreckage examination was later conducted at Inter-State Aviation, Inc in Pullman, WA on 8/20/24.

FUSELAGE:

The fuselage forward of the cockpit was crushed aft and upwards consistent with a collision with the rockface. The tail section aft of the cockpit canopy was found bent to the left.



Forward Fuselage

Both the right and left Wipaire floats were found detached.

An AAIR-AM-Safe airbag system was found to be deployed. The seatbelt harness and lap belts were found intact and unbuckled.

The preimpact position of the powerplant control levers could not be determined due to the impact force. The power lever was found in the reverse position. The propeller lever was found near the feathered position. The fuel control was found in the ground idle position.

The emergency dump lever was found in the closed position.

The airplane was confirmed to be N10122, an Air Tractor AT-802A, serial number 802A-0495 which was manufactured in 2013. The Hobbs meter was recorded at 1812.2 hours.

WINGS:

The left wing was found intact with crush damage to the leading edge in the aft direction. The left wing tip was not recovered at the time of the examination. An outboard section of the left aileron that includes the left aileron counterweight was not recovered. The inboard section of left aileron was found attached to the wing.



Left Wing

The right wing was found intact with some crush damage to the leading edge in the aft direction. The right wing tip was not recovered at the time of the examination. The right flap and right elevator were found attached to the wing.

Each of the wings were equipped with 189 gallons of fuel in the integral wing fuel tanks for a total of 378 gallons. Both the right and left fuel tank caps was found in place.

EMPENNAGE:

The empennage surfaces were found attached to the aft fuselage. The rudder was found attached to the vertical fin. The elevators were found attached to the horizontal stabilizers. An outboard section of the left elevator that includes the left elevator counterweight was not recovered at the time of the examination.

FLIGHT CONTROLS:

Flight control continuity was established to the extent possible by the wreckage. All observed separations were consistent with overstress.

Elevator Controls

The elevator controls are manually operated by steel and aluminum pushrods connecting the control stick to the elevator control horns through two control idlers. The elevator controls were found to be continuous by movement of the control stick.

Rudder Controls

The rudder controls are manually operated by a pair of stainless-steel cables running directly from the rudder pedal assemblies to the rudder control horns. The right and left rudder controls were found to be continuous from the rudder pedal to the rudder. The right rudder was found separated at the wreckage examination.

Aileron Controls

The aileron controls are manually operated by steel and aluminum pushrods connecting the control stick to the aileron control horns through multiple torque tubes, an idler and a bellcrank.

The right aileron controls were found to be continuous by movement of the control stick.

The left aileron controls were found to be continuous except for a separation of the aileron wing mounted steel push rod. Both ends of the wing mounted push rod were found in their correct respective locations.

Flap System

The right flap control system was found to be continuous from the flap actuator to the flap. The left flap control system was found to be continuous from the flap actuator to the separation of the flap steel push rod. Both ends of the flap steel push rod were found in their correct respective locations. The extension of the flap actuator measured approximately 3 5/8 inches which equates to fully extended (30°) flaps.

POWERPLANT:

The engine was equipped with a five-bladed constant speed, fully reversable, propeller. Two blades were separated from the hub. One of the blades was not recovered at the time of the examination. One of the three blades that remained attached to the propeller hub was found bent toward the face side of the blade. The other two blades that remained attached to the propeller hub were found bent toward camber of the blades. The blade found separated was bent towards the face side. The four recovered blades exhibited chordwise scratches.

The engine was confirmed to be a PT6-67F S/N PCE-RZ0118. The engine remained attached to the engine mount. Reduction gearbox separated at the "A" flange.



Propeller Wreckage

DISTURBANCE OF WRECKAGE:

Disturbance of the wreckage was limited to handling components to the extent necessary for identification and documenting their condition. We did not make any modification to the aircraft wreckage that would intentionally result in loss of evidence. No portion of the wreckage was removed by Air Tractor personnel during our involvement in this accident investigation except for the light bulbs for the following warning lights that were removed and provided to the NTSB: PROP IN BETA, FUEL FILTER, LOW FUEL, CHIP DETECT, AIR FILTER, GATE PUMP INOP, HYD PUMP ON, TRAFFIC ALERT.