

On July 10, 2024 we received a dispatch for the Horse Gulch Fire (location 46 41.28/111 41.8) approximately 15 east of Helena MT.

-At 9:28 Pacific Time A group of four AT-802 amphibious aircraft (Fireboss) left KCOE.

-FB-206(N3270Y), FB-205(N10122), FB-243(N398AS) and FB-244(N367AS)

-At approximately 11:55 Mountain Time, I (FB-206) made contact with the Horse Gulch Fire Air Attack and received clearance into the fire traffic area. The flight was instructed to circle the fire at 6500 ft to acquire target area. I called out our pre-scoop checklist on our inter flight frequency (127.47) before orbiting the fire. The checklist which consists of four items that all pilots will verbally acknowledge on said frequency. Item 1: verify four blue lights for water landing, Item 2: Prop forward for max rpm, Item 3: Fire gate armed, Item 4: Positive emergency dump pressure. All three pilots read back checklist verbatim. After one orbit around the fire perimeter and receiving our drop instructions our group flew westbound approximately four miles to our proposed scooping area (Missouri River/Hauser Lake).

-Once we reached the scoop site we visually inspected our scoop run, we determined that the water was suitable for scooping operations. We entered a right downwind to the south, I then told each pilot we would scoop single file, and to remain in the center of the waterway, giving adequate space for the aircraft in front of you. All pilots acknowledged the command on inter-flight frequency. I began my scoop northbound, once on the water with my probes deployed I noticed that I was experiencing a slight tailwind component on the water, at which point I aborted my scoop. Upon doing so I called for an abort scoop for the remaining aircraft on our inter-flight frequency. The third and fourth aircraft (FB-243 and FB-244) acknowledged and complied. FB-205 did not respond, I called again specifically for FB-205 again no reply. Moments later the pilot of FB-244 communicated that FB-205 had impacted the bank.

-I instructed FB-243 and FB-244 to fly north and orbit north of the waterway. The air attack asked something to the extent of, did one of us have a problem on the water to which I replied that I believed an accident had happened and to immediately come to our scoop site. Since I had not seen the accident, as it took place behind me, I began orbiting around the waterway looking for FB-205. After several orbits over the water I saw the wreck of FB-205 on the west shore of the waterway. I tried to call the air attack again but I believe he was already conducting an emergency response, I can't remember if he ever replied. I then flew north and joined up with FB-243 and FB-244 and we circled until the air attack instructed us to return to Helena (KHLN) and land. Which we did, we were on the ground at roughly 11:29 Mountain Time.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

I was in 243, -3 in a flight of 4 firebasses. We flew to Horse Gulch incident from Coeur d'Alene. The air attack instructed us to go directly to the fire and get oriented for where we would be working. Then cleared us to scoop. We performed a recon of our scoop ^{site} ~~sight~~ which was north of the dam at Hauser lake. The helicopters were dipping in the bay south of the dam. On the initial recon -2 called blind to -1. -1 talked -2 back onto visual contact and recon was completed. -1 gave instruction to the flight single file down the middle of the lake which was acknowledged by all in the flight. -2 touched down on the water roughly the same spot as -1. I touched down behind -2 on the water and started scooping. -1 ^{lead} called on chat frequency that the scoop was downwind and to jettison our load. I jettisoned and came off the water immediately. -2 was still on step on the water ahead of me. -1 ^{lead} called on chat again to jettison with no acknowledgment from -2. -2's line went off to the left and ~~the~~ impacted terrain. I was then instructed to orbit north of the lake and we returned to Helena shortly thereafter.

7/12/14

- Observation of impact with terrain -
- floats made initial contact with the shore and then the airplane hit the dip almost instantaneously. Floats appeared to roll under before forward contact was made.
- The airplane had a fireball out the left side quickly went out the airplane came to rest upright and somewhat on the shore. The airplane was in one piece minus the floats.
- ~~THE~~ 205's scoop lane looked from my vantage safe initially and in a direction that would use usable water appropriate. except for downwind component. It seemed like a shallow turn to the left because it looked ok until 205 was about to impact terrain.
- I did not observe drifter control movements but it did look like the engine was producing power and nothing was observed being jettisoned from the fire gate

FB 205

3008

#4 IN THE FLIGHT

6500'

10 JULY 24

Upon entering the FTA at approximately 11:30[±] local the flight of four circled in a trail formation receiving instructions from the AIR ATTACK on station. Once the flight had the plan on where to work the fire and picked a suitable body of water to deconflict (HAUSER LAKE) with helicopter traffic, the flight circled the lake and agreed on an ingress egress for the scoop. Upon commencing the scoop flight lead recognized a slight downwind condition and called for an abort of the scoop. As number four in the flight I aborted and called number three in the flight I would be passing him on his right side. Climbing out watching number three and maintaining my spacing I witnessed number two in the flight not abort nor jettison and impact the lake edge shoreline.

From the time I began following the aircraft visually to the point of impact at no time did I witness any control inputs, change of direction on the water or change in the aircrafts track on the water. From my vantage point approximately the five o'clock position and around 100' AGL the aircraft appeared to still be on the water or very near the surface of the

water because there were wake movement from the floats and disturbed surface water the entire length of the wing. There did not appear to be any wake scalloping from the floats as the wake was uniform throughout the scoop up until the point of impact. The aircraft track was as straight as if it were on rails right to the point of impact.