

Brief of Accident (Continued)

CEN12FA086
File No. 30903

11/28/2011

Riverwoods, IL

Aircraft Reg No. N59773

Time (Local): 22:50 CST

the level of impairment could not be determined based on the information available. However, marijuana use can impair the ability to concentrate and maintain vigilance and can distort the perception of time and distance. As a professional pilot, the use of marijuana prior to the flight raises questions about the pilot's decision-making.

The investigation also identified several issues that were not causal to the accident but nevertheless raised concerns about the company's operational control of the flight. The operator had instituted a fuel log, but it was not regularly monitored. The recovered load manifest showed the pilot had been on duty for more than 15 hours, which exceeded the maximum of 14 hours for a regularly assigned duty period per 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 135. The operator stated that it was aware of the pilot's two driving while under the influence of alcohol convictions, but the operator did not request a background report on the pilot before he was hired. Further, the operator did not list the pilot-rated passenger as a member of the flight crew, yet he had flown previous positioning legs on the dispatched EMS mission as the pilot-in-command.

Updated at Aug 29 2013 10:24AM

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OCCURRENCES

Approach - Fuel exhaustion
Approach - Loss of engine power (total)
Emergency descent - Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)
Uncontrolled descent - Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

FINDINGS

Aircraft-Fluids/misc hardware-Fluids-Fuel-Fluid level - C
Personnel issues-Task performance-Planning/preparation-Fuel planning-Pilot - C
Organizational issues-Support/oversight/monitoring-Documentation/record keeping-Operation records-Operator
Personnel issues-Action/decision-Info processing/decision-Decision making/judgment-Pilot - F
Personnel issues-Physical-Impairment/incapacitation-Illicit drug-Pilot

Findings Legend: (C) = Cause, (F) = Factor

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:
The pilot's inadequate preflight planning and in-flight decision-making, which resulted in a loss of engine power due to fuel exhaustion during approach. Contributing to the accident was the pilot's decision to operate an airplane after using illicit drugs.