



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington
Office

14th and Independence Svs SW
P.O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 6730

Date: June 28, 2003

Route To:

Subject: Preliminary (24-Hour) Briefing
Air Tractor 402A N4506L Contract #53-63A9-3-1

To: Regional Forester, Region 8

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS PRELIMINARY AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Location: 11 Miles NW of Pluaski County Airport, VA.

Date of occurrence: June 26, 2003

Time of occurrence: 0949

Team leader: Keith Lawrence

Mission: Aerial Application

Activity: Gypsy Moth (Slow The Spread Program)

Number injured: None*

Number of fatalities: None

Property damage (such as to vessels, equipment, and structures):

Substantial Damage to aircraft, propeller shaft fractured, landing gear collapsed, major fuselage damage.

Narrative: Air Tractor was two hours into his first fuel cycle of the day on a 2400 acre treatment block when the pilot observed orange flames and black smoke coming from both exhaust stacks and the engine stopped running. The pilot initiated a left descending turn away from terrain and feathered the propeller. The pilot selected the most suitable off site landing area he could find in the area with the altitude and airspeed he had available and setup an approach. The landing was in a farmyard area and the aircraft impacted a rockpile after touchdown, rotating the aircraft 135° to the left, collapsing the main landing gear and fracturing the propeller shaft. The aircraft came to a stop and the pilot exited the aircraft. NTSB delegated the investigation to the FAA, who arrived at scene on the morning of the 27th. The NTSB/FAA has removed and secured the aircraft and engine and plans an engine tear-down with the engine manufacturer Pratt & Whitney.

*The pilot was airlifted to the local hospital as a precautionary measure where he was evaluated and released.

/S/ Keith Lawrence, Team Leader



cc:
Safety Manager (at level authorizing the investigation)
Official case file