

Silliman James

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, September 26, 2013 3:52 PM
To: Silliman James
Subject: N4623M Accident Information
Attachments: ATT2900824.txt

James, I am forwarding you the pictures that I have so far and a Statement from Steve Rice the President of NorthStar Aviation In Ulysses, KS. Will contact you after we get the information from Inspector Landes visit. Probably next Monday or Tuesday.

This aircraft just had an overhauled engine installed at NorthStar Aviation in Ulysses Kansas. The aircraft originally was flown from EADS Colorado to Ulysses Kansas to NorthStar for GPS updates. Steve Rice from NorthStar reported that during the original flight from Colorado to his shop it was reported by the Pilot that the engine was leaking oil. After investigation the engine blower seals were found to be leaking and the engine total time since overhaul was over 1000 hours. At this time the owner and Steve decided to have the engine overhauled.

The engine was overhauled by Rex Thompson in Tulsa Oklahoma. NorthStar installed the overhauled engine and completed all required rigging and run up leak tests. Rice reported running the engine for at least 1 hour during these tests with no major problems only adjustments were made.

The airframe total time was reported to be 2101.6 hours with a fresh overhauled engine. Rice stated that prior to this aircraft visit the aircraft had sat for 5 years without any operation. The aircraft just went through an annual inspection by a mechanic in Colorado so during this shop visit the only areas that were touched by NorthStar were the GPS and Engine area.

This was the first visit for this aircraft at NorthStar. So they did not have any previous history of maintenance activity for this aircraft. Rice reported that the log books were destroyed in the fire. I asked if he could provide any maintenance documents that he had during this shop visit that he provide this office a copy for our files and investigation.

Rice stated that the Pilot was in a rush yesterday afternoon to leave Ulysses to get back to Colorado before dark so he departed around 06:15 pm for an approximate 220 mile flight. The winds were reported to be blowing from the south 25-28 gust to 40 knots. The aircraft departed to the North West and approximately 10 to 15 minutes in the flight after departure the Pilot saw and smelled smoke coming from the left side under the hopper and left wing area.

At this time the Pilot stated that he turned off a switch and the engine stopped running. This switch could be the magneto switch and at this point the Pilot was looking for a place to land.

It appeared that by the smoke that something was on fire so the Pilot tried to land on a dirt road. He was unable to make the road because he was landing down wind and ended up having to land in a corn field. When the aircraft landed in the corn field both main landing gears broke from the fuselage and the aircraft came to rest on its belly. The Pilot was able to get out of the aircraft without injuries. At this time the aircraft fire had increased and the flames and main heat source seemed to be bellow the hopper area and left wing attach area. The Fuel Tank Selector was reported to be in the left tank position and the fuel boost pump was believe to be on.

Rice reported that the fuel boost pump and filter assembly is located bellow the hopper area and may be an area to look at during our investigation. Again Rice stated that they had not worked in this area during this shop visit and did not remove any side panels that did not need to be removed for this visit only to access the work that was accomplished.

Inspector Landes is on site today to take pictures and get the pilots statements and gather any documents that would be available from NorthStar.