



STATEMENT

Joshua Lindberg
Air Safety Investigator
Central Region

Date: 8/17/2016

Statement provided by: Jeffrey Vigdal, Fargo FAA FSDO

NTSB Accident Number: CEN16LA314

Statement:

I travelled to rural Sanborn, ND, with FAA inspector Kelly Bosch. Met with Mr. Brian Welken owner of Lakeview Aviation, certificate number [REDACTED] at approx. 8:30am August 9, 2016. Mr. Welken provided his pilot certificate, current medical, and a copy of his Part 137 operating certificate upon our arrival. Mr. Welken explained the chain of events leading to the accident as follows: He was travelling back to his residence/landing strip after completing his run to refill and prior to making another run. He noted that the fuel indicators were reading $\frac{1}{4}$ on one side and $\frac{1}{8}$ on the other. Approx. 1.5 miles west of the point of impact the engine popped and sputtered as well as lost power, he was approx. 450 AGL. He turned toward the east where he had noted a hay field while the engine continued to pop and failed to produce power. He was rapidly descending and decided to attempt landing on a small dirt field road instead of the hay field. At his low approach angle he was unable to see that the road curved south around a small wetland, the aircraft clipped stalks at the edge of a corn field and impacted the edge of the slough where it skidded through the mud and slowly flipper over resting upside down in the shallow pond.

Inspector Bosch and I examined the engine, engine mount and propeller along with Mr. Welken at his residence. The engine was situated mount down in the back of Mr. Welken's pick up with the propeller removed. I removed the carburetor finger screen which was dry and indicated no presence of fuel. I also removed the lower fitting on the fuel line that connects the engine driven fuel pump to the carburetor where just enough fuel to wet the threads was noted. The fuel screen and hose were reinstalled and all observations were made in the presence of Mr. Welken and assembly/disassembly was accomplished using tools provided by him. The propeller showed no visible evidence of engine powered rotation at the time of impact. Two small nicks were observed in the leading edge of one prop blade, none of the blades appeared to have sustained

any other damage or be bent. No signs of plant matter from rotation thru the corn stalks could be noted.

Inspector Bosch, Mr. Welken, and I then travelled to the accident site approx. eight miles southeast of his residence. 46°53'31N 98°11'37W. The point of impact was concurrent with Mr. Welken's recollection of the events as well as the evidence observed by inspector Bosch and myself. At the time of our investigation the aircraft had been removed from the slough with an excavator and was still upside down and stabilized by cribbing to facilitate disassembly and removal from the site. The line from the header tank to the hand fuel pump was disconnected and no presence of fuel could be detected. Removal of the fuel filler caps on both wings revealed no fuel.

Inspector Bosch and Myself concluded the engine failed to maintain power due to lack of fuel.