

ACCIDENT ON SCENE INVESTIGATION SYNOPSIS

09/01/2016

CEN16LA343

N1726D—Cessna 170A—S/N 20169

Engine-Continental C-145, S/N 5971-D-1-2

Propeller-McCauley 1A170DM7653, S/N 55015

David R. Nelson, FAA Airworthiness Inspector

An on scene investigation was conducted on 09/01/2016 of an accident that occurred on 08/31/2016 at the Hibbing, MN airport (HIB). The aircraft involved was a Cessna 170A, N1726D, S/N 20169. The pilot and aircraft owner was identified as Randy Steven Beissel, DOB [REDACTED]. FAA records show Mr. Beissel as having a Private Pilot Certificate with airplane single engine land and airplane single engine sea ratings. Mr. Beissel sustained serious injuries and was still hospitalized and unavailable on the day of the on scene investigation.

The Hibbing Police Department had been asked to photograph and document the accident scene before allowing the aircraft to be moved. The aircraft had been relocated to the TNT Airworks maintenance hangar on the airport.

Photographs of the aircraft were taken. Aircraft was noted to have extensive damage to the left and right wings, fuselage section between firewall and front doorpost areas, some buckling of the wing carry through area of the fuselage and left main landing gear. The fuselage of the aircraft aft of the wing trailing edge did not appear to have sustained any damage. The tail wheel assembly was broken where the tail wheel attaches to the tail wheel spring assembly, but still attached to the aircraft. Control continuity was verified as continuous throughout the aileron, rudder, elevator and flap systems. The pitch trim indicator was found to be in the mid range position which was consistent with the pitch trim tab position. The engine had become detached from the aircraft during the accident, so continuity of engine controls could not be verified. The flaps were found to be in the retracted (up) position which was consistent with the position of the flap lever. An attempt to move the flaps was made, but due to the damage to the wings, they were unable to be moved. The fuel selector handle was broken off. The position of the fuel selector was attempted to be determined by lining up the broken handle with the stem and it appears the fuel selector is in the right hand position. The mechanic that was on scene shortly after the accident occurred stated that there was fuel flowing out of a fuel line that had severed from the engine and the stem had been turned with a pliers to stop the fuel flow. He was not sure what the actual position of the fuel selector would have been when the accident occurred. A copy of a fuel receipt for this aircraft from the accident date was provided by the airport manager. The receipt indicated that the aircraft had been fueled with 12.8 gallons of 100 LL on the accident date. The TCDS for the Cessna 170A shows fuel capacity of 42 gallons (21 per wing) with 37 gallons usable.

The aircraft had a Cleveland Wheel and Brake Conversion Kit 199-45, STC SA136L which according to FAA airworthiness records was installed in April of 1988. The right brake was

checked and appeared to operate satisfactorily. The left brake appear to be in good condition. The left brake operation was unable to be verified due to damage to the left master cylinder which appeared to be caused by the forward fuselage damage. The tail of the aircraft was lifted and the tail wheel rotated freely with no apparent issues noted with the bearings.

A check of the seat rails was conducted and they appeared to be in satisfactory condition. The pilot's seat was found to have the pin in the fifth hole from the front and appeared to be fully seated. An attempt was made to move the pilot's seat, but it was unable to be moved due to what appeared to be some deformation of the cabin area from the accident.

The engine was mostly intact except for the carburetor appears to have been broken off in the accident. The engine had mostly broken away from the aircraft during the accident and was completely removed during retrieval of the aircraft. The propeller was still attached to the engine and had some bending of the blades towards the aft of the engine, one more so than the other, which appears to be consistent with low power on impact. The blades did not appear to have significant scarring from rotation upon impact. The engine was lifted in the inverted position with an engine hoist. The lower spark plugs were removed and examined. They appeared to be in good condition. The engine was rotated using the propeller and all 6 cylinders appeared to have good compression. There were no unusual noises or issues noted when turning the propeller. Impulse couplings could be heard while turning the engine and all 6 spark plug leads were found to have a spark.

Tach time of the aircraft was noted as 2560.1.

The Airworthiness Certificate and a current Registration were found in the aircraft and photographed.

A bag that had been retrieved by personnel doing the recovery was found to contain a notebook and the pilot's logbook. The notebook pages and the pilot logbook pages that contained any information were photographed. The notebook and pilot logbook was left with the aircraft.

The airport manager was asked about access to the hangar that the aircraft was normally located. He stated it was rented from the airport and he could access it. I requested that he check to see if any maintenance records for the aircraft were in the hangar. He did check and stated they did not appear to be there. The operator of the maintenance facility where the aircraft was located stated that he had performed inspections on this aircraft for the owner and would be able to provide me with a printout of the last annual, which he provided me with. He stated that he was pretty sure the owner kept the records at home.

I provided the airport manager and the operator of the maintenance facility with my contact information and requested that I be contacted immediately if they hear of any change in the condition of the pilot. After coordinating with the NTSB IIC, I informed them that they could move the aircraft to the owners rented hangar, but to contact FAA or NTSB before allowing anyone access to it.

After leaving the airport a flash drive with on scene photos and copy of the initial police report were picked up from the Hibbing Police Department. Additional information will be sent from them via e-mail regarding measurements from the scene after all the information is compiled.