

Date: 8/29/2017; 1230-1330 EDT

Location: Munson Hospital, Traverse City, MI

Persons in Attendance: Inspector Chad Peterson

MI State Police (MSP) Officer Ron Rabineau

Persons Interviewed: Luciano I. Pierbon (Pilot)

Michel Potvin (Passenger)

Luciano I. Pierbon (Pilot)

When queried as to what happened during the flight Mr. Pierbon responded that there was plenty of fuel in the aircraft. He stated that the main (inboard) tanks held 66 gallons (33 each side), and the airpalne has outboard (tip) tanks that hold 17 each side. He stated that he had filled the tips two weeks ago but had been out of town since that fill up. Mr. Pierbon said that since the last time the aircraft was fueled he had flown to Lake Charlevoix (approximately 20 nautical miles northwest of Otsego Lake) and returned since filling the aircraft. On the day of the accident, Mr. Pierbon stated that he and his passenger (Mr. Potvin) departed Lake Otsego toward the north, flew west to return to practice the ILS 09 into Gaylord, MI (KGLR) and then flew to the airstrip that he owns. They circled the airstrip flew to the north, and then circled to fly toward the south when the engine quit. Mr. Pierbon stated that there was no bang, no sputter and the prop stopped horizontally. He had the power set at 2,700 RPM and 23 inches Manifold Pressure. When asked what altitude he said he was 500 feet at least, probably higher. He stated that he held the nose up to attempt to clear the trees. When he did not clear the trees the airplane came down and did not have any recollection of getting out of the aircraft.

Inspectors also asked how he was navigating, he indicated that he used the VOR to fly the ILS, but had also used an iPad mini and a Garmin portable GPS. When asked if he knew where those were, he thought it was possible they were given to him at the crash scene, but he was not certain of that. He reviewed his schedule for the day as best he could estimate and recollect. He and Mr. Potvin had eaten breakfast around 10-10:30. They went to Gilroy's hardware store to buy weed killer or fertilizer, and then stopped by his hangar for land aircraft at the Gaylord, MI airport (KGLR) to drop off a ladder to the hangar. Once they had completed that stop, they drove back to his home at on the east side of Otsego Lake. When pushed a little as to the timeline for his departure he guessed 1300 and thought he had flown for about 30 minutes. (The first call to MSP was 1312 eastern.)

Mr. Pierbon stated that the aircraft logbooks were locked in Sterling Heights and no one could copy those at this time as they are locked in a safe. Mr. Pierbon claims to have over 5,000 total hours, over 1,000 in float planes, 10 hours in the last 90 days and he stated that his flight review is due in November. The aircraft has flown about 10 hours this year. He uses 5 gallon cans and a funnel with screen to fill the aircraft fuel tanks at the lake. When asked about his preflight on the day of the flight, he stated that he always checks the floats, engine oil, and "always" sumps the fuel on preflight. He did say that because of the height to the top of the wing he did not climb up and check the amount of fuel in the tanks, however he estimated that the tips were full and there were about 45 gallons indicating on the gauges. When asked for an email address he stated he had none, but the best way to contact him was via cell phone [REDACTED].

Michel Potvin (Passenger)

Mr. Potvin was in his hospital bed, indicated that he had a broken tibia that would require surgery. Mr. Potvin stated that his friend (Mr. Pierbon) owned the airstrip where the Cessna 180 ended up. They took off from Lake Otsego toward the north (Mr. Potvin stated the departed Lake St Claire). He

indicated that the flight was local in nature, after flying around the airstrip a few times to view the property, they turned a few times to show that the fuel gauges move when the tanks are not full and the aircraft turns. It was just after this time that the engine quit. He stated he looked at Mr. Pierbon who was flying the aircraft attempting to reach the grass airstrip. They hit the trees and when they came to rest upside down in the aircraft he was hanging upside down by his seat belt. He received assistance from an unknown individual to get out of the aircraft. Mr. Potvin stated that he had some flight time flying aircraft with the pilot, mostly in helicopters, but nothing logged.

Fox Todd

From: Chad.Peterson [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, August 31, 2017 3:49 PM
To: Fox Todd
Subject: N180LP- Gaylord, MI

Todd,

I was able to have a 15-minute conversation with Mr. Pierobon this afternoon. I told him the "bulk" aircraft was left on the crash site and was released to him. I did indicate that the NTSB has retained the engine, a few engine accessories and the Garmin 196. He checked with his wife and she does have the broken iPad mini that was on the aircraft at the time of the crash. He also said that the 196 is the only GPS on the aircraft.

When asked about power settings he said that he was at a cruise power setting (2300 RPM & 23" MP). He said he has never had any issue with carburetor icing and does not introduce carb. heat unless below 17" MP. I asked what airspeed he was aiming at on approach, he said he did not let it go below 53 mph. He said that the engine was changed to the O470-50 2 to 3 years ago, however when I asked about obtaining logbooks or copies of logbooks, he was not able to tell me when that might be able to happen.

He was not willing to provide additional contact information for his wife, however his son Marco was able to relay a message for me yesterday. His cell phone was on the FAA registry data and is [REDACTED]. At that time he said that a doctor was waiting for him and he needed to go, and finished the phone call.

If you have any questions, I can be reached by return E-mail or phone Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at [REDACTED].

Chad Peterson

Aviation Safety Inspector
FAA Grand Rapids

[REDACTED]
Grand Rapids, MI 49512

T [REDACTED]
F [REDACTED]

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