

Memorandum of Conversation

Date: 22 December 2016

Time: 0945 central standard time

Conversation Including: Paul Robert Nicholls, Pilot/Owner/Mechanic

Conversation Regarding: CEN17LA057, N812C

Duration of Call: 20 Minutes



Summary & Factual Information from Conversation:

Mr. Nicholls reported that the accident airplane was typically equipped with snow skis during the winter snow seasons. In February 2009, he purchased the main landing skis, Federal Aircraft Works model A-2500A, from a private individual. The skis were purchased used with an undocumented service history. The skis were purchased as complete assemblies, which included all cables, bungees, brackets, and hardware appropriate for a Stinson model 108-3 installation. The forward and aft support cables were already fabricated and installed on the skis when they were delivered to Mr. Nicholls. Additionally, Mr. Nicholls reported that the support cables were not repaired or replaced while he owned the skis.

Mr. Nicholls reported that shortly after takeoff from a snow covered runway he heard a thump and subsequently saw that the left main landing ski tip had rotated up, past vertical, and was in contact with the left wing strut. He decided to land at nearby Ionia County Airport (Y70), Ionia, Michigan, because he anticipated requiring assistance upon landing and the departure airport was unmanned. Additionally, Y70 had a snow covered turf runway, south of the paved runway 9/27, that was typically used for glider operations. Mr. Nicholls reported that upon touchdown, the left main landing ski separated from the axle, the left gear leg dug into the snow, and the airplane rapidly decelerated before it nosed over. The right wing, left wing strut, and vertical stabilizer were substantially damaged during the accident.

On December 14, 2016, Mr. Nicholls, who was also an aviation mechanic, installed the main landing skis for the 2016/17 winter snow season. According to Mr. Nicholls, the main landing skis were installed per manufacturer's drawing No. 11R955/AB and that the work was documented in the airframe logbook. The accident occurred during the first flight since the skis were installed for the season.

--- End of interview summary ---

I can attest that the above summary and factual information was taken on the above stated day, and is correct to the best of my knowledge:

Signed: _ Andrew Todd Fox _

Dated: _ 22 December 2016 _

Andrew Todd Fox
National Transportation Safety Board
Air Safety Investigator