

N816FF AT-802A Reyno, AR 07/18/2017
Off Strip Landing

On 07/18/2017, Air Tractor 802A, N816FF, S/N 802A-0714, aircraft total time 9 hours, landed in a soy bean field near Reyno, AR due to a reported engine over torque and unresponsive throttle inputs. Summary of pilot interview and actions taken, July 19, 2017.

Operation Prior to Accident:

First operation of the day was to check operation of spray equipment. During the dispensing of the second load in this operation, in a left turn the pilot observed the yellow fuel pressure light illuminate and then extinguish. Two turns later in the application process the pilot observed the yellow fuel press light illuminate with an engine surge. Pilot stated that the surge was similar to a loss of power. The pilot elected to abort the operation and return to the maintenance base.

Maintenance inspected the aircraft and performed ground runs with no defect noted. Air Tractor was contacted concerning the situation and recommended that Service Letter 314 be incorporated. Maintenance repositioned the fuel filter drain tangs per the service letter and provide a clearance hole in the lower cowl per instructions from Air Tractor. Ground operation of the aircraft was satisfactory.

Accident Operation:

The aircraft was converted for application of dry material. The aircraft transitioned to the operators remote landing strip, was loaded with dry material and took off to apply the material. Up on completion of approximately 10 passes over the field the aircraft was returning to the strip to reload. On approach to the strip upon reduction in power the pilot stated, engine torque went to 6,000 lbs.ft. and propeller speed dropped to approximately 710 RPM and the engine torque would not respond to throttle inputs from the pilot. At that time the pilot elected to land in the adjacent field due to limited space on the landing strip and concern that the aircraft was not be developing sufficient power to maintain flight even though the indicated engine torque was high.

Post Accident:

Inspection of the aircraft revealed that all engine controls appeared to be properly installed and rigged, inspection of bleed air reference line for the fuel control and prop governor were properly installed and intact. Fuel sample from the header tank drain appeared normal with no contamination noted. Review of data retrieved from the aircraft MVP system revealed that on the last flight the engine did experience an over torque, loss of propeller speed, and a possible over speed of the gas generator, no external mechanical conditions were observed that would contribute to this condition. Data will be provided to engine manufacture by Air Tractor for review and recommendations for additional actions.

Prior to leaving the scene of the accident it was agreed that the aircraft would be recovered and moved to the Pocahontas, AR airport (M70) and no other maintenance actions were to be accomplished until a coordination with the engine and air frame manufacture could be accomplished.

William R. Kelly
ASI LIT FSDO