

Bald Eagle Aviation LLC

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28-Jan-19

Mr. Phillip L. Potter
Aviation Safety Inspector
Denver FSDO-NM03
Denver, CO 80249-6339

Dear Sir:

Here is the pilot statement you requested regarding the in-flight fire and subsequent destruction of N711KJ.

Pilot Statement
N711KJ
25 December 2018
In-flight/On-Ground Fire At KFTG
0948 MST

I departed KFTG eastbound on the first takeoff to approximately 8-10 NM east of KFTG to check the navigation system indications on an ILS approach. That approach terminated with a normal touch and go landing followed by a second traffic pattern flight with the intention of conducting repeated touch and go landings. Following the second landing, a takeoff was initiated, the aircraft was rotated to the initial climb attitude and became airborne. At approximately 200-300 feet AGL near mid-field, I detected an unusual odor, looked inside the cockpit and saw flames forward of the pilot's side rudder pedals. I immediately rejected the takeoff, transmitted a Mayday message stating the airplane was on fire. I made a normal 3-point landing on Runway 26 between taxiways A5 and A4, exited the runway at A4, selected the fuel valve to off, shut down the engine with the mixture control, turned all the electrical switches off and exited the airplane. The fire continued to increase in intensity and most of the fuselage was consumed before the Bennet Fire Department arrived. The wing fuel tanks did not catch fire or explode. The airplane is a total loss.

Sincerely,

James D. Taylor
CFII