

INSPECTOR STATEMENT

ACCIDENT # CEN20LA014

NAME: Christopher Gent

Narrative Statement:

On October 25, 2019 I spoke with the accident airman about the circumstances surrounding an accident that occurred on October 24, 2019 in a Cessna 172, N1443E, operated by Iowa Lakes Community College (ILCC) Part §141 Pilot School. The airman involved had minor injuries and was in the hospital at the time he was contacted initially. Contact information was exchanged and Mr. Gent gave a brief description of what happened.

Mr. Gent stated he was on a cross country to gain flight time towards his commercial pilot certificate under the Commercial TCO for ILCC. His cross-country route took him on multiple legs, at the time he noticed oil pressure was at zero, Mr. Gent was enroute from Mason City, IA to Fort Dodge, IA. After departing, he stated that he noticed the oil pressure at zero but didn't see that the oil temperature was very high. The oil temperature was in the green but the oil pressure was zero. Mr. Gent stated that he decided to turn towards Estherville, IA, his originating airport, and when he did this, he started to smell oil. Shortly after the smell of oil, he experienced pronounced vibrating of the engine. Mr. Gent stated the vibrations were so violent he couldn't see the engine instruments unless he brought the power to idle. At this point, he decided to make a decision to look for a place to land due to his inability to maintain altitude. When asked if he could see the propeller turning he stated that his landing light was inoperative and he couldn't see. The airman stated he put the aircraft in a landing attitude and didn't use flaps. Mr. Gent stated after he touched down, and when everything stopped, he got out of the aircraft and walked to a nearby farm to ask for help. The owners of the farm he walked to transported Mr. Gent to the hospital.

On November 5, 2019 Mr. Gent was contacted and asked questions about the night the accident occurred. When asked about preflight procedures, Mr. Gent stated that the aircraft was new to the school and didn't have all the items that were normally located in the aircraft. Mr. Gent stated he had to run into the FBO multiple times to replace items that were necessary. During the preflight, Mr. Gent stated he added oil, about half quart, to the aircraft. When notified that the dipstick was not found in the aircraft, Mr. Gent stated that he might have put the dipstick in the tie down ring. This is consistent with where the location of the dipstick was on the accident scene and later observations of ferrous/non-ferrous material consistent with oil starvation of the engine. Mr. Gent stated in this conversation that he was never taught to turn the lights on before a night flight, and that students are only taught at the school to check for overall condition of the lights.

On November 20, 2019, Inspectors from this office went to Estherville. I questioned multiple students and instructors at the school as well as speaking with Mr. Gent. Mr. Gent stated that he had not accomplished a weight and balance for the flight.

Inspector Name:
Christina M. Grabill

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Signature:



Digitally signed by Christina
Marie Grabill
Date: 2019.12.05 11:07:44 -06'00'

Date: