



The National Transportation Safety Board

Office of Aviation Safety
Central Region
Memorandum for the Record
Pilot Statement Summary
CEN20LA383
Henderson Texas
September 5 2020

The pilot reported the following information:

- The pilot sold the airplane and was flying the airplane from Paris, Texas to Cleveland Texas, for delivery to the buyer. Everything went well on the flight from Paris, Texas, and he landed the airplane at Rusk County Airport (RFI), Henderson Texas, for a fuel stop. The airplane was refueled with about 20-gallons about 20-minutes prior to takeoff.
- Upon takeoff from RFI, shortly after rotation, the pilot noted that the airplane seemed to be “mushy,” even though the engine was “screaming,” as if it was producing power. He stated that the airplane “seemed to be hanging from the propeller.”
- The pilot initiated a left turn to return to the runway, but he decided to level off. After leveling off, the tail of the airplane impacted trees and the airplane went straight down.
- After impact, the pilot and passenger exited the airplane.
- The pilot stated that the engine on the aircraft had just been installed on August 5, 2020. The engine had been rebuilt about 10 years ago and had been stored and pickled. After the installation, the engine was operated, and he flew the airplane around the pattern a few times and all had been working fine.
- The most recent annual inspection was completed on August 10, 2020.

Alexander Lemishko

[REDACTED]

Senior Air Safety Investigator
NTSB Central Region Aviation