

National Transportation Safety Board

Office of Aviation Safety

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AIRCRAFT EXAMINATION

9/4/2024

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A. ACCIDENT

Location: Bluff Dale, TX
Date: 4/3/2024
Time: 2211 cdt
Airplane: N8946, Bellanca 7KCAB

B. AIRCRAFT EXAMINATION

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C. SUMMARY

On April 3, 2024, at 22:11 central daylight time, a Bellanca 7KCAB, N8946, was destroyed when it was involved in an accident near Bluff Dale, Texas. The pilot sustained minor injuries. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91 personal flight.

The pilot reported that he was on a night visual flight rule (VFR) cross country from Brownwood Regional Airport (BWD), Brownwood, Texas, to Granbury Regional Airport (GDJ), Granbury, Texas. He said that during the flight he saw flames coming from the oil access door on the upper right side of the engine cowling. The pilot shut off fuel to the engine and executed an emergency descent. He landed in a field 15 nautical miles southwest of GDJ. The pilot exited the airplane and the airplane continued to burn and was destroyed by the fire.

D. DETAILS OF THE EXAMINATION

1.0 Accident Site

The accident site was not visited.

2.0 Airframe Examination

The airplane examination was conducted at the facilities of Air Salvage of Dallas, where the airplane had been relocated after the accident. Since the accident was the result of an engine compartment fire and the pilot did not report any difficulties with the airframe or any flight control system, the examination was focused on determination of the fire source. In a telephone conversation, the pilot reported

that the fire was coming out of the cowling near the oil filler access door on the cowling. During the examination, the cowling was removed, and fire damage was evident toward the rear of the engine. The lower part of the engine, including the sump and carburetor area, did not have significant evidence of fire damage. Based on damage to components in the engine compartment, the damage appeared to be centralized near the centerline of the engine between the firewall and the rear of the engine. The fuel and oil hoses on the rear of the engine all had fire damage as did other engine components in that area. The fittings on each hose were not found to be loose. A bundle of wires near the engine mount had melted and their conductors were in contact with the metal engine mount tube. The extent of the fire damage to hoses and other components in the area prevented positive determination of the source of the fire.



Figure 1. Engine viewed from right side.



Figure 2. Area between engine and firewall as viewed from right side.



Figure 3. Engine viewed from left side.



Figure 4. Area between engine and firewall as viewed from left side.

Submitted by:

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