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To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Statement for the accident and annual inspection of N172BX
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At the time of the accident I was working at Taylor Aviation Services, located on the south ramp at T74. The hangar is roughly 300 yards east of runway 35 and faces the runway.

Initially I had my back to the runway but did hear the aircraft on takeoff. T74 receives a lot of local flight school traffic so at first, I paid no attention to it. There was nothing notable about the sound of the engine. It was just any other airplane taking off.

It got my attention when the engine backfired and sputtered a few times. I want to say the engine got quieter as it lost power before the backfire, similar to pulling back the throttle but again, I wasn't paying close attention to it yet. After the loud backfire, the engine softly sputtered three or four times as the engine slowed to a windmilling speed. The engine made no additional noises throughout the descent.

A couple of seconds after the backfire and the silence I realized the engine had fully quit and turned to see what was going on. N172BX was just past the 1000-foot markers on the south end of the runway at only 200 to 300 feet of altitude in a slightly nose high attitude and a slight bank to the left. The pilot maintained that attitude and bank until I lost sight of it behind the T-hangers. I didn't see the aircraft touch down or come to a stop in the creek.

I happened to have my phone on me and managed to capture a video of some of the descent. I provided the video to the airport manager, [REDACTED], and I understand it was passed to the FAA investigator, [REDACTED].

Additionally of note, I did see N172BX initially take off some time prior to the touch and go when the accident occurred. The takeoff looked routine and engine sounded fine. I'd estimate 20 to 30 minutes had passed from the first takeoff to the accident.

In regard to the annual inspection completed a few months prior to the accident, [REDACTED], the owner of N172BX, came by the shop some time in mid-summer and said he had come out to fly but was unable to get the engine to start. Although not sure when, he said the annual was coming due soon and asked if I could do the inspection as well.

Based on previous experience with this aircraft, I suspected it just had water in the fuel system again but due to already scheduled work, the no start issue and annual inspection were both put off for a couple of months.

When I did finally get around to it, I decided not to sump anything and attempt to start it as it was left. I assumed it wouldn't start that I'd be draining the fuel system anyway. I just wanted to verify the squawk. I did my normal start procedure. A few pumps of the primer, crank and crack the throttle slowly as needed and the engine started with no issue or difficulty. The ground run up was satisfactory. The mag check was acceptable, carb heat was operating correctly, and the engine ran smooth throughout the run up.

During the annual inspection, a small amount of water was drained from the tanks and gascolator. The gascolator bowl and screen had minor amounts of debris, were cleaned and reinstalled. Compressions were all passing however cylinder five was very low at only 61/80. Cylinder bore scope inspection showed no alarming defects. Mag timing was within tolerance, and the mags and impulse coupling were found operating correctly. Spark plugs were cleaned gapped and tested and one was replaced as needed. The ignition leads were found in acceptable condition. The no start squawk was ultimately noted on the work order as "could not duplicate".

A customer squawk of the tachometer being pegged was also marked as "could not duplicate". The tach cable was removed and greased as a precaution. Tachometer operation was normal for both pre and post inspection ground runs.

The turn coordinator was replaced at owner's request, and the ELT battery was replaced due to being past the expiration date.

During AD review the left mag was determined not in compliance with AD 11-26-07 and was removed from service. A new or overhauled mag was not available for purchase, so a serviceable mag was sourced. I opened the mag for visual inspection of the components and bench checked the mag before installation.

The annual inspection was performed using a checklist based on the requirements of FAR 43 appendix D and was approved for return to service after satisfactory ground run and ops checks.

If you need any additional detail or information I'd be happy to provide what I can.

[REDACTED]

A&P [REDACTED] IA