



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Eastern Region – Ashburn, Virginia

RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Who: Michael Williams, witness

When: February 20, 2015

In a telephone conversation, Mr. Williams stated that he owned a trucking company and was in his shop about 3.5 miles east of the accident when he heard the airplane. He said the engine was cutting in and out like it "ran out of gas." Mr. Williams went outside and saw the airplane in level flight about 1,000 to 1,500 ft above the ground. The airplane's landing light and navigation lights were turned on. He said the pilot tried to start the engine 4 or 5 times, but the engine would start, run for a few seconds, and then quit. On the last attempt, the engine started and it sounded like the pilot pulled the throttle to idle. The witness watched as the airplane descended "in a gradual glide" as if it was going to land before it disappeared from his view. He did not hear the airplane impact terrain.

Leah D. Read

Sr. Air Safety Investigator

National Transportation Safety Board

On 2/18/2016 I was asked to fuel a Bonanza with 15 gallons per side. When I opened the first fuel cap I noticed that the bladder inside the tank was bulging out. I asked our Safety director Stuart Ochs to take a look and after that we asked the pilot to take a look. The pilot saw the bladder and touched it. He told me it was ok to fuel how it was. I fueled the right wing, then the left. I noticed the left wing's bladder was the same as the right. I added 30 gallons total to the aircraft. The plane departed shortly after that.

Walter Hammond

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Walter Hammond.

Base Safety Coordinator

Sheltair KDAB



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Eastern Region – Ashburn, Virginia

RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Who: Richard Lane, Airplane Owner/Last Passenger

When: February 22, 2015

In a telephone conversation, Mr. Lane stated that pilot James Cook picked him and another passenger up at the Greensboro Airport, Greensboro, North Carolina, on February 18, 2016, and flew them to Daytona Beach, Florida. Mr. Lane, who is not a pilot, sat in the front right seat. He said the flight to Daytona Beach was normal, weather was nice, and the airplane operated fine. Mr. Lane said they may have had a tailwind on the way down and they had to be sequenced to land when they arrived in Daytona because air traffic was heavy. Mr. Lane said he was in a rush after they landed because he was late to meet people in Florida. The pilot told him that he was going to need gas and he intended to put 15 gallons of fuel in each wing. Mr. Lane then went inside the FBO, paid for the fuel and left. Mr. Lane said the pilot never discussed his plans about the return flight, and just assumed he would fly back to Lexington, North Carolina, where the airplane was based.

Mr. Lane stated the pilot wore his seatbelt and shoulder harness the entire flight to Daytona and used an iPad, a handheld GPS and panel mounted GPS during the flight. The pilot did not mention anything about the shoulder harness not functioning and he did not see the pilot fussing with it at any time during the flight.

Leah D. Read
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