



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Douglass Brazy
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

October 26, 2016

Subject: ERA17LA024, N1827Y, Cessna 172C, Accident Date 10/19/16, Ceder Key, Florida – Telephone call with Federal Aviation Administration Inspector Michael Singleton from the Tampa, Florida Flight Standards District Office.

Mr. Singleton called on October 25 and 26 to brief his on-scene activities for this investigation. He provided the following information:

The pilot was not injured, the two passengers, one seated in the right front and one in the right rear seat, received minor injuries.

The accident occurred about 0725 eastern daylight time.

The airplane was substantially damaged and appeared to have ‘cartwheeled’ in the shallow water about 200 yards from the approach end of runway 23.

The airplane departed runway 5 at Cedar Key (CDK). According to the pilot, as he attempted to climb out of ground effect, the airplane would not climb. At about 100 feet AGL, he attempted to make a 180 degree turn back to the airport intending to land on runway 23.

The airplane descended and impacted the shallow water, it was substantially damaged (outboard 3 feet of each wing bent aft/up with crush damage, fuselage damaged/buckled on right side near cabin door, firewall damaged) and appeared to have ‘cartwheeled’ before coming to rest upright about 200 yards from the approach end of runway 23. The airplane was damaged further during recovery from the water, the engine separated and was submerged in water, the empennage was mostly separated from fuselage just aft of the baggage compartment.

The pilot stated that the engine sounded normal, and there were no issues or problems with the airplane, other than it would not climb.

Two witnesses contacted the Cedar Key Police department anonymously, they indicated that the airplane made an initial takeoff roll with the engine popping and sputtering, the takeoff was aborted, the airplane taxied back and then took off for the accident flight. The second takeoff roll was unremarkable.

The airplane was last fueled (full – wing tanks plus an 18-gallon auxiliary tank in baggage compartment) on 10/10/16 at the Williston Airport (X60), about 30 nautical miles northeast of CDK. The only flight since that fueling was the one from X60 to CDK.

The pilot reported his bodyweight as 210 lbs, the right seat passenger reported 180 lbs, the rear seat passenger 160 lbs. The Cedar Key Police Chief believed all 3 to be at least 20 lbs heavier than they indicated. The Chief also estimated that the baggage – mostly duffel-bag type – weighed a total of 20-25 lbs and had been stowed on the unoccupied rear seat.

The pilot stated that the purpose of the flight was local sightseeing. However, the two passengers indicated that they were destined for an unknown airport in New Hampshire.

There were no logbooks recovered at the scene. The pilot indicated that the airplane's last annual inspection was performed in October 2015. He stated that he had flown about 3 hours in the last 90 days, 10 hours in the last calendar year, 600 hours in the same make/model as the accident airplane, and a total of 1800 hours.

FAA records indicate the pilots commercial license had been revoked. Mr. Singleton advised he would seek more information about when, and for what reason. The most recent 3rd class medical certificate on file, was issued in in January 2009.

Mr. Singleton examined the airplane on 10/26/16 after it was recovered to the shore. He provided the following:

All 6 cylinders were intact, all spark plugs were in place and tight.

The top spark plugs were removed, the electrodes were intact, the #3 plug was oil soaked, the others had various amounts of rust/corrosion consistent with water immersion

The propeller was rotated by hand, thumb compression was confirmed on cylinders 1 and 2, it was weaker on 3, and nonexistent on 4. Removal of #4 valve cover revealed exhaust valve stuck in open position. The magnetos were wet, sounded as though they were rotating when propeller was rotated, however no spark was detected, (perhaps not rotated fast enough).

Fuel selector found in "off". The left main wing tank breached and dry, right main was about ½ full and breached, the aux tank was undamaged, and full. The sump drain appeared to not be properly installed for the aux tank.

4 quarts engine oil, a tow bar, and some miscellaneous items (bucket, hoses) remained in baggage area.

<end>