



MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Aaron McCarter
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

October 22, 2018

Subject: Eyewitness
Person Contacted: Joe Cook
NTSB Accident Number: ERA19FA020

Narrative:

Mr. Joe Cook, an eyewitness to the accident who lives in an adjacent property stated, the engine throttled up, down, then back up several times with about 5 to 10 second breaks in between before the engine eventually stopped. The airplane was about 100 feet in the air when this was taking place.

The airplane wings were wobbling, and you could see the ailerons moving. Then the airplane completely stalled, banked hard left then went straight down. He was alarmed; he watched the entire accident sequence and heard it very clearly.

The engine, when it was operating normally at a high rpm, it sounded smooth, but after the airplane stalled, there was a backfire immediately as the airplane was going out of control.

Cook is a retired aircraft mechanic and stated that the power up and downs sounded like it was pilot induced; "on purpose" It looked like the pilot had control.

The airplane was headed north, then turned back to the south, almost like the pilot was looking for a place to land. Then it banked hard to the left and went straight down.

[END]



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Subject: Eyewitness
Person Contacted: Ben Sea
NTSB Accident Number: ERA19FA020

Narrative:

Mr. Ben Sea, an eyewitness to the accident who was working near the accident site. He was on the corner of Cooper and Highway 90. He stated, the engine going in and out. He saw that it was flying parallel to the railroad tracks in an east west direction. The airplane was heading west, and the engine was sputtering and kept going in and out.

The airplane kept getting lower and lower, then the engine went completely out as the airplane was about 20 feet over the tops of the trees.

The wings were wobbling, and the airplane just disappeared

When the engine power was going up, then back down then back up, it was not in a frantic way; it was almost like it was on purpose. When he first noticed the airplane, it was about 200 to 300 feet over the tallest trees and about 1,000 yards east of his position.

Sea compared the engine sounds to a “vroooooom! *long break*, then a vroooooom! *long break*, then a vroooooom! *break*. He did not hear any backfire or misfire. He just heard the engine power modulating, then it went quiet.

[END]



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Subject: Mechanic Familiar with the airplane
Person Contacted: Bob Kaba
NTSB Accident Number: ERA19FA020

Narrative:

Mr. Bob Kaba was an Airframe and Powerplant Mechanic familiar with the airplane. He had worked on the airplane in the past and documented the last inspection about 6 months prior.

The airplane was in good shape. He was unaware of any mechanical issue. He heard that the airplane was misfiring or backfiring. Suggested that it could be a timing issue.

The airplane had Slick Mags installed. It also had a relatively new exhaust and he recently repaired the left exhaust stack.

Compression was very good on the engine. He thinks it was in the 70 to 78 range on all 4 cylinders. It was a good, solid running engine.

[END]