



Conner McCauley-Inspector's Statement – Preliminary Accident Investigation

Registration: N323MT
PTRS: SO19201907759
Make: Beechcraft
Model: BE-55
Serial Number: TC-1256

When: March 25, 2019

Where: Beechcraft BE-55, registration N323MT with three people on board flying, took off from Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport (FXE), Fort Lauderdale, FL. Aircraft was located at 26.3236°N and 80.9434°W or approximately 3 to 4 miles east of Big Cypress Airfield (59FD), Clewiston, FL.

What: Aircraft experienced a left engine failure followed by a right engine failure. The airman attempted to land in an open field.

Who: Pilot In Command (PIC): Brent Alan Sutton (Certificate Number: [REDACTED])

Examination of the aircraft and crash site:

The aircraft was found in an open field at approximately 26.3236°N and 80.9434°W or approximately 3 to 4 miles east of Big Cypress Airfield (59FD). The airplane was facing a north westerly direction approximately 20 feet north of a creek on top of a rock. On the south side of the creek, there were three tire marks leading up to the creek. The airplane nose and right engine made contact with the ground. The tail of the airplane was several feet higher than the nose. The propeller of the right engine was separated from the engine and was found on the ground underneath the engine. The propeller of the left engine was in a feathered position, still attached to the engine. The ailerons on the right wing were deflected upwards and the ailerons on the left wing were deflected downwards. The control wheel was turned towards the right. The rudder was deflected towards the right. The nose of the airplane was partially torn from the fuselage and was deflected towards the left when viewed from the pilot's seat. The right landing gear was found detached from the landing gear underneath the right wing. The nose gear was found in the creek. The flaps were partially extended. The lower portion of the instrument panel opposite the front passenger seat was dented towards the nose of the airplane. The main fuel tanks were empty and the auxiliary fuel tanks contained fuel. The fuel selectors for both the left and right engine were selected for the main tanks.

Miscellaneous:

At approximately 1600EDT on March 25, 2019, Inspectors Conner McCauley and Enrique Garcia arrived in a field located at 26.3236°N and 80.9434°W after a report was received of an aircraft accident. Inspectors McCauley and Garcia met with Hendry County Sheriff Deputy Erick Benitez. Deputy Benitez gave the inspectors the names of the pilot and passengers. The pilot was Brent Alan

Sutton and the passengers were Brantley Smith and David Saraiva. Deputy Benitez stated the pilot and passengers suffered minor and injuries and were sent to receive treatment at Hendry Regional Hospital. Inspectors McCauley and Garcia took photographs of the accident scene on the northside of the creek. Inspector McCauley communicated with Timothy Monville and Peter Wentz of the NTSB regarding the accident scene.

On March 28, 2019, Inspector McCauley interviewed Airman Brent Alan Sutton (Pilot-in-Command) over the phone. N323MT originated on March 24, 2019 at St. Petersburg-Clearwater International Airport (PIE), St. Petersburg, FL and landed at Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport (FXE). On March 25, 2019, Airman Sutton departed FXE at 1100EDT with passengers Brantley Smith and David Saraiva. Airman Sutton stated he received fuel in the auxiliary tanks before departing. Airman Sutton stated he did not visually verify the main and auxiliary fuel tanks had fuel before departing. Airman Sutton stated he relied on the fuel gauges. Airman Sutton stated the airplane climbed out normally. During level off, Airman Sutton stated the autopilot was not holding altitude and he stated that the same malfunction occurred on the flight to FXE on March 24. Inspector McCauley asked if the autopilot was inspected by a mechanic before departing on March 25, he stated no. The airplane then experienced a left engine failure. Airman Sutton attempted to restart and was unsuccessful. During the feathering procedure of the left engine, the airplane experienced a right engine failure. Airman Sutton stated he advised Air Traffic Control (ATC) and requested vectors to the nearest airport. While flying to Big Cypress Airfield (59FD), Airman Sutton decided to land in an open field approximately 3 to 4 miles east of 59FD. Airman Sutton stated he feathered the right engine and lowered the landing gear. Airman Sutton stated the airplane made a smooth touchdown and he pushed hard on the brakes and pulled the control wheel towards him. Airman Sutton stated he saw a ditch and a canal during rollout and impacted the terrain. Airman Sutton stated he hit his face on the instrument panel and his front passenger broke his wrist and will need surgery. Airman Sutton stated he did not attempt to switch the fuel selectors from the main tanks to auxiliary tanks for both engines at any point during the flight.

On April 1, 2019, Inspector McCauley wrote Airman Sutton two letters. The first letter requests him to produce his logbook to the South Florida Flight Standards District Office (FSDO-19) within 10 days of receipt of the letter. The second letter requests Airman Sutton to schedule reexamination under the authority of U.S. Code Title 49 § 44709.



Conner McCauley
Aviation Safety Inspector