



NTSB RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Lynn Spencer
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: 3/1/2019
Person Interviewed: Robert D. Lillard (Pilot)
NTSB Accident Number: ERA19TA111

The following is a summary of a conversation that occurred with the above-named individual:

- The private pilot stated that he was flying with VFR flight following to the Bahamas, which he has been doing for years.
- He refueled in Fort Pierce, FL (topped off all tanks: 84 gallons) and was going to MYBG (Great Harbour Cay, Bahamas). He estimated his departure to be 1:30 EST.
- When Miami Center cleared him to climb to 7,500 ft, he enriched his mixture and then increased the propeller RPM to climb.
- He stated that as soon as he increased the propeller RPM, the engine started to sputter.
- He turned on the fuel boost pump, but nothing changed. He checked and the fuel pressure was good.
- He then attempted to apply carburetor heat but noted no improvement.
- He switched fuel tanks and at this time noted that the engine quit completely. It had been about 30 seconds since the first shudder.
- He did not recall whether the propeller was windmilling as he turned his focus on ditching.
- He estimated that he was 20-25 miles east of West Palm Beach and he turned back toward land mainly to turn into the wind and lower his ground speed and let Miami Center know that he was going to be ditching.
- He established a glide speed of 75 kts and used full flaps to reduce his speed before ditching.
- With the fixed gear airplane, he was worried that the plane would flip when the fixed gear hit the water, so he landed tail first.