



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

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Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: May 27, 2020
Person Contacted: Robert Overstreet
NTSB Accident Number: ERA20LA195

Narrative:

Mr. Robert Overstreet was contacted by phone on May 27, 2020, at 0950 EDT. He was called at [REDACTED] He provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED]

He began the conversation stating that his family has owned the airplane since 1971¹, and he had flown it since 1975, when he first soled. He was a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) air traffic controller and retired after 32 years. He was also on the airport commission for W63 airport, and reported that he would notify the fuel supplier (Phillips 66) at W63 about the accident but added that he has never had a problem with fuel purchased there.

At the beginning of the interview he was advised that the NTSB is a federal agency mandated by Congress to investigate aircraft accidents, and NTSB has no authority to take any action against any individual. He was also informed that the purpose of an NTSB investigation is for safety only, and any person NTSB talks with has the right to representation; he agreed to the interview without representation.

He holds a Basic Med, and a private pilot certificate with airplane single engine land rating with the new plastic certificate issued February 23, 2010. Since his first flight he has flown it about 1,800 hours. His total time is about 2,000 hours, and he had accrued about 250 hours in T34B airplanes. He had also been the maintenance officer for the Naval Academy flying club. He weighs 205 pounds, and since he flies from the left seat the airplane is left wing heavy, which causes him to burn fuel first from the left fuel tank. He does not hold an airframe and/or powerplant mechanic certificates.

¹ According to FAA records the Bill of Sale to his father was dated April 12, 1971.

The airplane was based at Lake County Regional Airport (W63), Clarksville, Virginia, where it was hangered. It was equipped with a 250 horsepower Lycoming O-540-A1A* engine that was field overhauled in 2012 or 2013. At the time of overhaul the flexible hoses in the engine compartment were replaced. Since overhaul the engine had accrued about 260 hours and had undergone only routine scheduled maintenance, adding that there have been no issues since the overhaul, which included in part new cylinders. The crankcase halves were sent out for inspection/repair. The maintenance records are currently in the airplane, which was insured. He is the only person that flies the airplane. He fueled the airplane about 2 weeks earlier from the self-service facility at W63. Since fueling excluding the accident flight the airplane had been operated about 30 minutes with the fuel selector positioned to the left tank. The airplane's total fuel capacity is about 56 gallons equally divided between a fuel tank in each wing. It also had dual electrically operated auxiliary fuel pumps. There was no engine monitor or cowl flaps installed, and the avionics were "nothing special." It was equipped with a Uavionix SkyBeacon ADS-B transmitter installed at the left wing position light, but he did not have the position lights on during the accident flight. The portable GPS receiver was at his house being charged. He added that the airplane may look cosmetically bad needing paint and interior work, but he spends money on mechanical. He does perform preventative maintenance allowed by 14 CFR Part 43 and assists the mechanic during annual inspections. The front seat restraint consisted of a lapbelt only; no shoulder harnesses were installed. His airplane was also equipped with PMA fuel caps.

The purpose of the accident flight was pleasure; the flight was planned to be 20 to 25 minutes. While at W63 he cleaned the fuselage exterior lower skin of oil, and because it was a beautiful day decided to fly to William M Tuck Airport (W78), South Boston, Virginia. W78, where he had friends. He performed a preflight inspection of the airplane and has a preflight checklist but because of the length of time that he has flown it he follows a flow for his exterior inspection which starts at the right wing root. His inspection is very thorough and he checks the flight controls, moves them by hand to check the hinges, checks the securing hardware, and the position lights. His check also included a check of each wing fuel tank sump drain and also the gascolator and no contaminants were found. His airplane has an engine cowling that can be opened for preflight and he tactically checked the exhaust system, checked the flexible hoses for condition and security and also looked for signs of fuel stains, and also checked the P-Leads for condition and security.

Prior to departure he recalled obtaining the ASOS at 1405 EDT, and the visibility was greater than 10 miles and the sky was clear below 12,000 ft. He performed an engine run-up noting that the magneto decreases were about 25 rpm or less from each magneto. He also mentioned that on a flight prior to the accident flight he did a "grounding check" of the magnetos and no discrepancies were reported.

He departed about 1408 EDT with the fuel selector positioned to the left tank and flew about 12 miles to the east to the John Kerr reservoir, then flew over the Dan River towards W78. When he was approaching W78 he noted a person cutting the grass runway and elected to fly a "low approach" to make sure that person would not be a hazard, but there was no NOTAM issued for the grass cutting. He broke off from the river and entered the downwind leg of the airport traffic pattern for runway 19 at a 45° angle. On the downwind leg he was close-in, and because he still was at cruise or low cruise power setting (22 inches of manifold pressure and 2,300 rpm) he

planned to extend the downwind leg. When the flight was on the downwind leg 1/2 way down the runway at about 1,200 ft mean sea level the engine quit suddenly.² He was in disbelief because that had not happened before and equated it to running a fuel tank dry. His first emergency action was to turn on the auxiliary fuel pump, followed by switching the fuel selector to the right tank, moved the mixture control to the full rich position, and trimmed to maintain best glide airspeed. He also nearly simultaneously turned towards the approach end of the runway with the airplane configured with the flaps and landing gear retracted, maintaining 80 miles-per-hour (mph). He did not feel the issue was carburetor ice because he had only encountered that 10 times in all the years, there was no loss of manifold pressure. He noted there were trees between his location and the approach end of the runway and that the terrain near his location was higher than the elevation at the approach end of the runway. He maneuvered around an abandoned 2 story house and noted 2 obstruction lights that were actually the obstruction and there to mark obstructions (trees) that were no longer in place. He rolled out of the turn and when on final approach lined up with the runway, he realized he might be able to reach the runway. He initiated extension of the landing gear but about 1 second later while the landing gear were coming out of the wheel wells but never extended, the airplane impacted the obstruction light when caused the airplane to rotate to the right 220° to 230°. The airplane touched down in tall/thick grass on airport property and slid an unknown distance. After coming to rest he turned off the master switch, removed his lapbelt, and exited the airplane. He did not see any fuel leakage. He did not sustain any injury, and was wearing the lapbelt.

The approximate time of the accident was 1430 EDT.

The airplane was recovered to the ramp at W78. After recovery, an individual (Justin Dix of Dix Aviation) at W78 checked the fuel strainer and found it contained uncontaminated fuel. The mixture and throttle controls were connected at the carburetor. The mixture control moved freely, but the throttle control did not move as freely. Although the tanks were not drained, he expected the left tank to contain between 15-20 gallons and the right tank 25 gallons or more. He personally turned the propeller through a couple blades and felt compression.

He was advised that I intended to either have the FAA or hire a mechanic to inspect the fuel system components to verify where there was and was not fuel. He was asked if the maintenance facility at W78 had worked on the airplane and he indicated that the shop had installed the ADS-B³ and worked on the normal brake system, but did not do any work to the engine.

The FAA inspector in charge is Mark Jennings. He indicated his e-mail address is [REDACTED] and after the call ended Mr. Overstreet texted his personal cell phone of [REDACTED]

He was asked if he had any pictures of the pole and was advised that he did not but was going back to that location today to place a tarp to cover the canopy and would text them to my work

² He later added or clarified that suddenly he, "got very busy flying the airplane, and whatever the altimeter said was of little concern at the time."

³ According to FAA Form 337, the ADS-B was installed on June 20, 2019.

cell phone. He texted three pictures the same day at 1424 EDT (Figure). He confirmed the pole was located on airport property.

During the conversation he was advised that the damage to the right horizontal stabilator (Figure 1) classified the event as an accident. The damage would affect the flight characteristics of the airplane.



Figure: Digital Photograph Provided by Pilot Depicting Impacted Obstruction Light Pole in Foreground and Approach End of Runway in Background.



Figure 1: Photograph Provided by Victor Yore. View Depicting the Damage to The Right Horizontal Stabilator.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on May 27, 2020. He replied on May 28, 2020, at 1256 EDT, with comments that were incorporated into the narrative. The final version was e-mailed to him on May 28, 2020.