

**From:** [Michael Stolz](#)  
**To:** [Rakestraw, Ron \(FAA\)](#)  
**Subject:** N7900V Report Revision  
**Date:** Monday, September 21, 2020 5:16:23 PM

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Ron,

While en route from Cross City, FL (KCTY) to Lagrange, GA (KLGA) the engine of 7900V abruptly quite with no warning. At that point I established best glide speed, shut off my fuel selector, and landed it in a clearing in the forest with no bodily harm, no damage to other people or property, and some aircraft damage. Before flight this morning I looked into the fuel tanks and noted around 1/3 in both tanks, topped off the fuel with 72 gallons over the top of the wing, and visually double checked that the fuel was full after allowing for equalization then departed KCTY at approximately [8am](#). The engine quit between [1:35- 1:40](#) into the flight. The left tank fuel gauge appeared to be inoperative when I departed but since I was not familiar with the airplane I did not know if it had been disabled or if it would come back into service throughout the flight (it has been my experience that they do some times). The right fuel gauge seemed a little erratic but was counting down the fuel as I progressed throughout the flight. When the engine quit the right tank gauge was not indicating empty. I chose that the airplane was safe for this flight concerning the fuel because of my conservative fuel planning process that I have used successfully on many other ferry flights with different aircraft. I talked to several pilots with 1340 experience and it sounded like the most I could expect it to burn would be around 36 gph using the power settings that I intended to use. I made my flight plan to Lagrange assuming 40 gph and decided I would divert to a closer airport if I could not make it there in less than 2 hours, leaving me with 40 minutes of reserve. I would have made it at about 1:45. After the fact, I calculated my actual fuel burn using the 106 gallons usable that was placarded on the wing and came up that the engine was burning 62 gph. This seems extraordinarily high and I am suspicious that the engine quit for a different reason or that fuel was being leaked in flight. In hindsight I can see that only flying a 1 hour leg first with an unfamiliar airplane would be best practice that I will employ from now on now that I understand how far off fuel consumption estimates can be. I also will insist that the fuel gauges be functioning to the best of their designed ability as a secondary monitoring system in any aircraft that I fly.

Let me know if you need any other details and I will be happy to provide them.

Thank you,

Michael Stolz

On Sep.21, 2020, at 13:13, Michael Stolz [REDACTED] wrote:

Ron,

While en route from Cross City, FL (KCTY) to Lagrange, GA (KLGA) the engine of 7900V abruptly quite with no warning. I landed it in a clearing in the forest with no bodily harm, no damage to other people or property, and some aircraft damage. This morning I topped off the fuel and double checked that the

fuel was full after allowing for equalization then departed KCTY at approximately 8am. The engine quite between 1:35- 1:40 into the flight. After visual inspection of the fuel tanks I suspect fuel starvation is what caused the failure but I have never heard of a r1340 that burned 62 gph. I did my fuel calculations based on what I considered a conservative estimate of 40 gph from talking with other pilots with 1340 experience. I was 8 minutes from Lagrange when the engine quit which should have left me with 40-45 minutes of reserve. Let me know if you need any other details.

Thank you,

Michael Stolz

## Inspector Statement N7900V

9/21/2020 12:02 Contacted by SO ROC, connected to GA State trooper on scene and pilot ( ) who reported no injuries, no property damage but "some" damage to the aircraft. The aircraft is located in a recently harvested forest plot in Hamilton GA. The pilot reported he was in route to LaGrange (LGC) from Cross City Florida (CTY) as part of a multi-leg ferry flight of the aircraft to the new owner in Fargo North Dakota. The pilot reported that he thinks he ran out of fuel. The trooper provided the airman transportation to the Harris County Sherriff's office and secured the scene.

At 14:15 I arrived at Harris County SO and picked up the airman and after a brief introduction, drove to and arrived at Johnson Mill Road ( ) at 14:28. The aircraft was off the road approximately .33 miles West of Johnson Mill Road at 32°45'24" N 084°48'1" W laying at heading 132°. The flight path of the aircraft prior to initial touchdown was 030°, according to the PIC. The aircraft's right wing struck the ground, hit a large previously felled tree that cause significant damage to the right wing leading edge into the mid-structure and spare of the right wing and provided the energy to force the aircraft to spin to the right 105 degrees, this caused both main landing gear to buckle under the fuselage. There is a noticeable wrinkle in the fuselage skin adjacent to the LH flap. The prop had damage to all three tips appearing not to be under power at impact. There was no post-crash fire and the fuel tanks both were confirmed to be empty, apart from a few drops of fuel. The PIC claimed to have fueled the aircraft himself and confirmed visually the tanks (both) were full. The PIC also confirmed that the fuel quantity system was inoperative prior to take-off in Florida, however he chose to fly because he "had good data as to what the aircraft's fuel burn should be per hour". The airman stated that, even though he has over 1200 hours in Make and Model (S2R), this was the first flight of this type engine (Radial) and that there must be something wrong with the fuel burn rate.

Control cable continuity was confirmed and no issues were observed. I provided the PIC and the aircraft owner contact information for Atlanta Air Recovery and departed the scene around 15:45.

I provided the PIC transportation to a Columbus airport (CSG) area hotel. During that drive the PIC and I discussed the definition of "Airworthy" as being a two part equation of 1) the aircraft meeting its type design or properly altered state, and 2) is safe for the intended flight. The PIC provided me an email statement as requested. After dropping the PIC at his hotel I contacted the registered owner (Paul Lindeman ) and requested the aircraft maintenance records for N7900V (Last two annual inspections and any logbook entries for the engine, prop and airframe for the last year) as well as registration documents as the registration branch records do not show it is currently registered (De-Registered/Cancelled).

During the phone conversation with the aircraft owner, Mr. Lindeman stated that he had talked with the PIC the previous day and suggested the PIC study the POH with regards to fuel burn and also suggested that the first leg of the flight be limited to one hour in duration to ensure actual fuel burn was within the "estimated" fuel burn rate. ( )

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9/22/2020 Received airframe, engine and propeller logbook entries as well as AD compliance data for each from the aircraft owner. The owner also stated that the check (to Aircraft Records Branch in OKC) had "cleared" so she knew the package that was mailed on September 1, 2020 for the recordation of the sale and registration was received.

**RONALD C  
RAKESTRAW**

Digitally signed by  
RONALD C  
RAKESTRAW  
Date: 2020.09.24  
10:36:11 -04'00'

Ron C. Rakestraw

AFG-700 Atlanta FSDO-11



## **MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD**

**Todd Gunther**  
**Air Safety Investigator**  
**Eastern Region**

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**Date: September 29, 2020**  
**Subject: Information Provided by Paul Lindeman (Owner)**  
**NTSB Case Number: ERA20LA328**

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According to Mr. Lindeman, this was the first time that Mr. Stolz had flown the airplane. He was at 2,500 feet msl when the engine quit. He had told him to read the flight manual and had told him on the first leg to only go about an hour and a half at the most.

Mr. Lindeman also advised that he should not have pushed it past an hour and a half, the carburetor had a fuel enrichment system, and that wide open, it would burn close to 60 gph.



## MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

**Todd Gunther**  
**Air Safety Investigator**  
**Eastern Region**

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**Date: September 30, 2020**  
**Subject: Information Provided by Michael Stolz (Pilot)**  
**NTSB Case Number: ERA20LA328**

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According to Mr. Stolz, he was ferrying the airplane back when the accident occurred. He was unfamiliar with this airplane. It was the first time he had flown it. He had flown behind Garretts (A type of turboprop) before, but never a radial engine.

He had been in cruise at 2,500 feet at a power setting of 30" of manifold pressure and 2,000 rpm. He had flown for about an hour and 40 minutes when the engine quit, and he believed that he should have been only 5 minutes out from his destination when that occurred.

Prior to the flight, the tanks were about 1/3<sup>rd</sup> full, so he filled the left-wing tank until it was completely full, then filled the right-wing tank. He then put the last bit of the fuel in the left-wing tank.

He believed that he should have had about two hours and forty minutes endurance with 106 gallons onboard.

When the engine quit, he was over hilly terrain, and pitched for best glide. The propeller was windmilling, so he moved the throttle back and forth without result, and did not have time to check the magnetos, and did not have time to use the manual fuel pump.

After the accident, he looked in both filler ports, and it looked to him that the fuel tanks were dry when he landed.



## MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

**Todd Gunther**  
**Air Safety Investigator**  
**Eastern Region**

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**Date: October 13, 2020**  
**Subject: Information Obtained from FAA Inspector Juli O'Gorman**  
**NTSB Case Number: ERA20LA328**

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On October 8, 2020, Inspectors from the FAA's Atlanta Flight Standards District Office examined N7900V at Atlanta Air Salvage, in Griffin, Georgia.

The following information was garnered during that examination

Impact damage precluded making any attempt to run the engine using the engine controls unfeasible, with major damage and breaks in the structural tubing between the cockpit and engine mounts.

Both Magneto "P" leads were checked for proper operation with the magneto switch. The right magneto "P" lead was found to have expected results, the magneto lead would ground with the magneto switch in the "OFF" or "L" position of the magneto switch and open in the "BOTH" and "R" switch positions.

The left Magneto "P" lead was found to have erratic indications when the magneto switch was placed in the "BOTH" or "L" positions but functioned normally in the "OFF" or "R" positions of the magneto switch. The erratic operation was traced to a splice in left magneto "P" lead.

The wiring from the left magneto to the suspect splice was a single conductor wire, with the wiring from the splice to the magneto switch being a shielded single conductor cable. The shielding was found to have been crimped by the splice allowing an intermittent short between the shielding and the center conductor. The wiring shield was terminated to a ground terminal at the magneto switch and a ground lug attached to the airframe side bulkhead.

The Fuel strainer at the "wobble" pump was opened and inspected for evidence of fuel, none was found.

The carburetor bowl drain plug was removed, and a small amount of fuel (about 3 ounces) was captured. The fuel was clear blue in color and had the aroma of 100LL aviation gasoline.

The engine had about 6 gallons of oil in it. The drive train was rotated, thumb compression was present on all cylinders, and continuity to the accessories on the back of the engine was confirmed.

The oil tank was drained, and no unusual debris was noted. The oil filter was also removed and opened, and no metal was found in the pleated filter material.

The spark plugs all appeared to be normal in color and appeared to have normal wear.

The left and right magnetos were removed, the drive bushings were found in serviceable condition and the magnetos were hand tested along with a visual inspection of the points and coils.

The left magneto, Type: SB9RU3 s/n: BB3486 was checked for proper "E" gap and general condition of the points and coil, the points showed a light pit was forming, the points were dry, and the coil did not show any signs of arcing. Hand rotation of the magneto produced spark at each of the rotating lugs.

The right magneto, Type: SB9RU-3 s/n: BB2831 appeared to have been recently overhauled, fresh grease was found on the internal gear, fresh "anti-tamper" paint had been applied to most of the internal hardware, the external parts had fresh zinc coatings. The right magneto was checked for proper "E" gap and general condition of the points and coil. the points looked to have some type of oil residue on them and, the points had a rough surface with some pitting evident. The coil did not show any signs of arcing, hand rotation of the magneto produced a spark at each of the rotating lugs.

The wing fuel tanks were visually inspected, and the tanks did not appear to have been breached. The fuel caps were inspected, the seals on the caps were dry rotted and hard, and the caps would not fit and lock tight.

The tank fuel filler ports showed signs of rust and scale, and there were no signs of fuel in either tank. Both low point drains were present and in the locked position, and there was only minor evidence of fuel staining on the right wing coming from the tank access panels and the fuel cap.

October 15, 2020

On the morning of Sept. 21 we, my wife and I observed an aircraft flying extremely low from south to north. The aircraft sounded unusually loud and was directly over our home. Watching the aircraft because of the sound and the altitude we noticed the engine made a coughing sound, and exited a white or light grey cloud of smoke from the engine area. At which time the aircraft seemed suspended. It appeared to stop. Mere seconds passed and the aircraft dipped the right wing and spiraled into a glide in the direction from which it came. We lost sight of the aircraft after this because of the trees. Mere moments later we heard a loud noise. The photographs depict the damage to the right wing tip which appeared to have impact damage. There was a dead tree in the path the aircraft left. Both the suspect tree and the damage to the wing tip are visible in the photographs along with scarred ground. We visited the site of the crash to ascertain if assistance was needed but the pilot had exited the aircraft and was nowhere to be seen. The cockpit was open. We took the photos, put a business card in the seat, shut the canopy, took a look around for the pilot in the general area of the aircraft and left. The elapsed time from the point of the failure, to us reaching the aircraft was about 1 hour. We time stamped 10:39AM to 11:04AM . We called the Harris County Commission Chair from the site and she reported the crash.

If you need further information please call or text me @ [REDACTED] Text is better.  
Cell service is sketchy on this side of the ridge.

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*Dannie C. Kemp*



## MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

**Todd Gunther**  
**Air Safety Investigator**  
**Eastern Region**

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**Date: October 20, 2020**  
**Subject: Information Provided by Inspector Juli O’Gorman (FAA)**  
**NTSB Case Number: ERA20LA328**

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According to Inspector Gorman, she spoke with the previous owner of the airplane, Mr. Don Quincy Jr. The following is the information he provided:

Mr. Quincy stated, “If they didn’t get any fuel between Cross City and where they crashed, they were pushing the envelope.” Mr. Quincy explained that the engine was a geared engine with a bigger prop on it and it’s called a geared 1340, it burns a lot of fuel.”

Mr. Quincy also stated, “If you get one with a 45 gph fuel burn you’re doing good, most of them run in the mid 50 (gph) range. That is the typical 1340 burn especially in Florida where it is hot and humid”.

Then he further stated, “and that thing had the little tanks on it, only 110 gallons or so, total”. He described the region of Alabama and Georgia to be “like flying over an ocean, except for with trees” he called it the “pucker zone” and explained that there are “not a lot of good options for landing except a highway”.

He explained that it was an “As Is” purchase but that he was unaware of any mechanical issues with the airplane. He stated, “that’s just how aircraft are sold especially when they are that old because you can just pick them apart”. He said in his opinion it was a good airplane.

He also explained that he thought it was “kinda strange to not even go over the aircraft with him” he explained he’d “been doing this a long time and that was just kinda strange.” He stated that the Pilot showed up a day early and left before Mr. Quincy got there (to the airport hangar) without any kind of meeting, going over the airplane, or even a hello.

Inspector Gorman asked if he had a copy of the POH/AFM and he stated, “it was in the airplane.”

**From:** David Tucker [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, October 23, 2020 7:30 AM  
**To:** Davis, Jeffrey M (FAA (FAA) [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Fuel Burn

Jeff,

I wasn't as successful as I thought I may be, but here's what our chief flight test pilot had to say:  
*"It's been over 20 years since I spent much time in those aircraft. I think it's more like 50 to 55 gph on takeoff, 45-50 working and low forties for cruise for the R1340 geared engine."*

Thanks,

*David W. Tucker*  
Director of Quality Systems

THRUSH AIRCRAFT, LLC  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]



**From:** Davis, Jeffrey M (FAA (FAA) [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 22, 2020 9:04 AM  
**To:** David Tucker [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Fuel Burn

David,

Ayers SR2  
Engine P & W R-1340-S3H1-G  
Prop H-S 23D40-303

Normal Operation Fuel Burn

Thanks,  
Jeff Davis