



MEMORANDUM for RECORD

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Date: April 2, 2021
Correspondence from: Cheryl King (FAA Orlando FL FSDO)
NTSB Accident Number: ERA21LA349 – Grant-Valkaria, FL

The following are excerpts from email correspondence from Inspector King:

The story is they were climbing and in turn leaning the engine. I already have written statements from them with some accompanying logbooks but, haven't determined her hours as of yet. The pilot was **PRANALI, NIRAV SHAH**, and a 1st class medical date of 02/11/21, home of record is India. The passenger has an address in Panama.

In addition the engine has since new/overhaul only 10 hours with no issues previously. The carburetor was intact and was severed during impact and sliding as the studs remained in place. They had plenty of fuel and was on the left tank whereas, it was breached therefore, we do not know the quantity. The right tank had approximately 17 + gallons and it was said they fueled prior to departure. The flight time logged was only about 10-20 minutes total.

Both women are employed by the flight school. It was not an instruction flight but more so a gaining time flight. They sustained what appears to be minor or no injuries. One complained of a headache and in conjunction with banging her head with evidence of trauma. The other woman complained of her knee hurting and later shoulder pain probably due to the restraint.

The aircraft if not seeing the initial email is trashed and probably destroyed due to the extent of the damage such as, the left wing spar is significantly damaged, the right last about three to four feet is damaged. This probably from the fence posts. The fire wall has significant damage and the left gear was dislodged and about 50 plus feet to the forward left side of the aircraft.

In addition the engine, the carburetor and associated engine cowling and components, the skin is wrinkled and floor area buckled. The prop and nose cone also destroyed. I will get her SPAS report to you and it is attached to this email.

Here is the latest on the accident that happened yesterday. I will be heading back to the site today and Doug, I will provide the name and contact information for the pilot later today along with her SPAS report and aircraft pictures. Please provide the NTSB number if assigned.

We are moving the aircraft today, JAX Air Recovery, will be on site around 10, I will be there and once trailered will be transported back and hangered at or near the flight school in Merritt Island.

Judging from the damage it will be an accident and possibly even destroyed due to substantial spar damage both wings, fire wall damage, broken and dislodged engine components and broken engine mounts. The left gear came off and was approximately 50 feet forward and to the left of the aircraft and quite possibly due to making contact with several fence poles layered with barb wire stretched along the dirt road and we believe is what caused the majority if not all of the damage to the wings.

The right gear appears intact, but was in the mud under water, the nose collapsed and the entire nose section/engine area to include the cowling and prop are a mess. Seems when the left gear became dislodged it also, damaged the flap. The cockpit floor is buckled as well as other areas on and around the forward bulkhead. A few windows were broken and the ELT mount broke therefore it did not go off and pieces, parts & fairings were in and around the ditch. The ditch itself not large is approximately 5-6 foot across and about three feet deep and deeper in other areas.

The aircraft did not appear to leak any fuel however, small deposits of what we think may be hydraulic fluid from the brake line that tore off and left a small noticeable bit of residue fluid. The land manager had environmental come out and assess the area and it appears he had no worries of what he saw. I will ask that the recovery team lay out some desiccant to trap and catch anything that may leak when lifting and moving the aircraft.

The fuel selector was in the left hand position and this was turned off. No signs of fuel in the left tank and the right tank had roughly 17-18 gallons and given the selector on LH side, used most the fuel I assume however, with that, it was said they fueled prior to leaving and the departure verses the accident did not involve a lot of time so, we obviously should question that or it leaked out during transition before hitting the ditch.

They did remain moving forward on the dirt road for about I would say 50-75 feet and once they started taking out the fence poles and lost the gear it spun and went sideways into the ditch. The battery was also disconnected on site.

The accident took us west on SR192 into Osceola, just outside of the Brevard County Line. The aircraft was positioned in farm land about 12 miles deep off of Kimfer Road, all of which was dirt.

The aircraft belongs to "2FLY", a flight school in our district, based at Merritt Island Airport. The two occupants, both women hold private pilot certificates and were gaining hours with no instruction. Both are employed by the flight school. They claimed no injuries however, both were taken to the hospital due to one woman having a pretty good bump on her head and the other made mention to her knee but, also favored her shoulder due to the restraints therefore, they were instructed to have the a checkup and the results are unknown.

The land manager is Joey Smith. The sheriff on scene was Travis Fitzgerald. I understand that the accident was reported by the DOM, for the school and requested assistance from the sheriff's department to locate the downed aircraft. Both the crew members were picked up by the sheriff's department and returned to Merritt Island. I will get their information with who was piloting and who was the passenger.

The director of maintenance (DOM), spoke to the crew and they made mention that they were leaning the engine and was awaiting for the RPM to drop and having said that would make that incorrect and in this case when leaning would get a "rise" in the RPM.

The engine itself is new and just installed on the aircraft so, the school is quite certain that no deficiencies exist with the operation of the engine. Running it will be out of the question as too much damage has taken place. We will perform visual inspections to be sure.

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