



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Timothy W. Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: March 17, 2022
Person Contacted: John A Pless
NTSB Accident Number: ERA22LA045

Narrative:

FAA inspector John Pless contacted NTSB by phone on November 4, 2021, at 1428 EDT. He called from [REDACTED]

He indicated that there was no fuel contamination from the facility that fueled the airplane (Figures 1 and 2). He noted fresh oil covering the bottom fuselage skin.

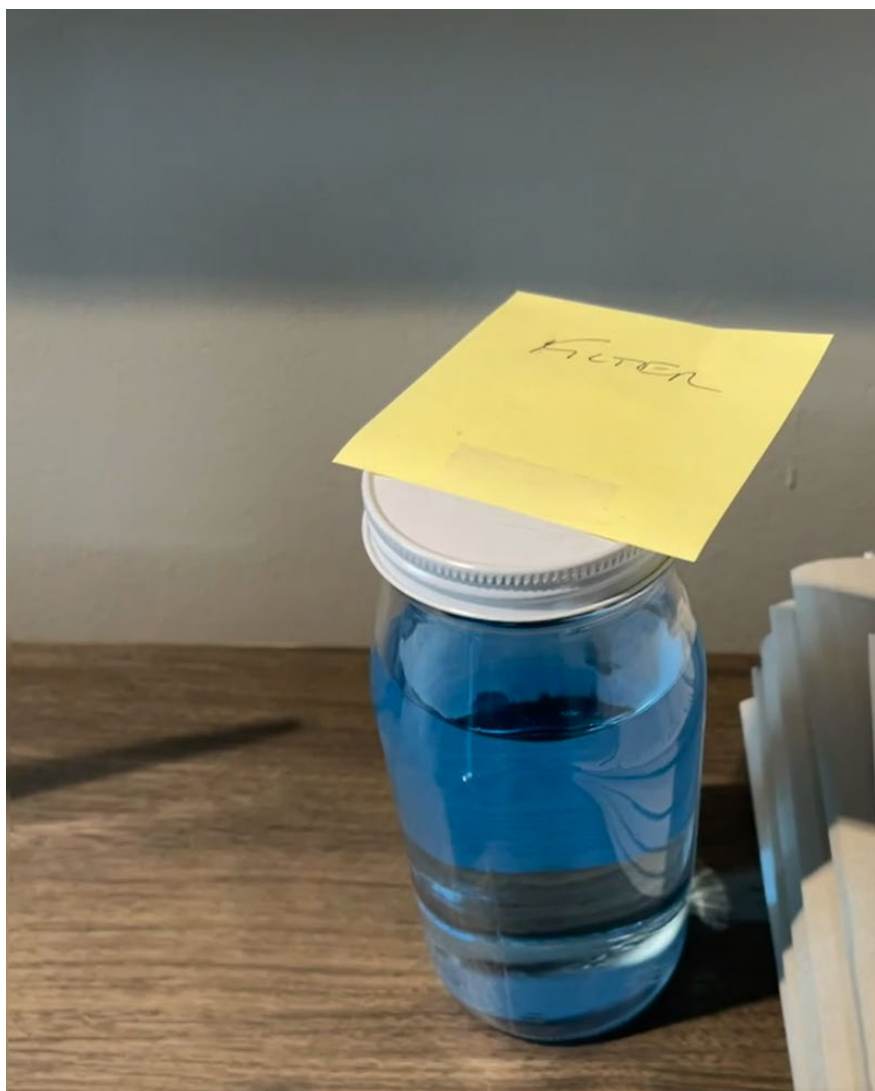


Figure 1: ScreenShot from FAA Video. View of Fuel Sample Taken From Filter that Fueled the Accident Airplane.



Figure 2: ScreenShot from FAA Video. View of Fuel Sample Taken From Tank that Fueled the Accident Airplane.

The call end time was not recorded.

The digest was reviewed with him during the call and he agreed to the content.



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Date: March 17, 2022
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Narrative:

FAA inspector John Pless contacted NTSB by Facetime on November 5, 2021, between 0830 and 1215 EDT. He called from [REDACTED]

During the Facetime call he was at Atlanta Air Salvage located in Griffin, Georgia, and was inspecting N172XX, for NTSB investigation ERA22LA045.

With respect to the accident flight, the fixed base operator Atlantic has a video that depicted the left cowling open that might be consistent with the pilot adding oil.¹

During his inspection of the airframe, he noted oil on the belly of the airplane (Figure 1). The airplane was not equipped with shoulder harnesses. Both fuel tanks contained 100 low lead fuel. A fuel sample from the left fuel tank did not contain any contaminants, while the right fuel tank contained some sediment but no water. The left horizontal and elevator were cut by powerlines. Fresh oil was noted in the cockpit floor behind the firewall. The airframe fuel strainer was empty but there was some debris inside. The bottom engine cowling had evidence of old and fresh oil. An emergency locator transmitter was not installed. There were 2 or 3 full quarts of engine oil in the airplane.

Examination of the cockpit revealed the following:

Tachometer – 1196.72
Throttle – Full in
Mixture – 1/2 way out

¹ Refer to NTSB Record of Conversation with the pilot contained in the NTSB public docket for this investigation.

Fuel selector – Off²

During the FAA postaccident inspection of the O-300-A engine, serial number 24221-D-0-D, he noted a hole on top of the engine case above the No. 6 cylinder. He also noted a crack on top of the crankcase from the No. 5 cylinder thru the crankcase backbone to the No. 6 cylinder. The crankshaft was seized and could not be rotated. All valves appeared ok and he performed borescope inspection of each piston and all appeared ok. The oil filler cap was tightly installed, and the oil drain plug had sludge. He noted the oil filter was broken from impact, but still had safety wire attached to it. The crankcase breather line on the airframe side was blocked by sludge. The aluminum fitting for the crankcase breather line at the engine was nearly blocked. The magnetos were tightly secured and there was no evidence of oil leakage from either. Both magnetos were rotated by hand and sparked at all towers. The nose seal was flush with the crankcase with evidence of room temperature vulcanizing (RTV) sealant. The oil suction screen contained some ferrous material. About 4 to 5 ounces of oil were drained from the oil sump which was full of metal.

He will have the engine removed.

The Facetime call ended at 1215 EDT.

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² Was turned off by the fire department



Figure 1: FAA Digital Photograph. View of the Airplane at The accident site. Note the oil covering the bottom of the Fuselage.



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Narrative:

FAA inspector John Pless was contacted by phone on November 19, 2021, at 0956 EST. He was called at [REDACTED]

He inspected the engine on November 18, 2021, and indicated that the pilot/owner was present. He was at Atlanta Air Salvage facility from 0900 to 1500.

He indicated that there had been evidence of previous oil leaks from the valve covers and also the pushrod housings that the owner was trying to resolve, but he did not say he was having a leak from the oil filter adapter.

The oil filter was safety wired, and there was safety wire present indicating the oil filter adapter was safety wired to the accessory case housing¹. The oil filter adapter was located on the engine centerline. There was evidence of an oil leak from the rear portion of the engine.

The oil filter contacted the firewall. The oil filter element was inspected and there was no contamination. His examination of the engine revealed oil exhaustion. The oil passages were clear. The accessory case where the oil filter adapter installed was fractured.

¹ By e-mail on November 19, 2021, at 0938 EST, inspector Pless indicated, "These are the findings from N172XX engine teardown yesterday. It had oil starvation throughout the lower end of the engine causing the catastrophic damage. [Supplemental Type Certificate] STCSE8409SW was installed sometime in 2020 (no documentation), apparently there are some concerns about leaking and as far as I can tell the housing was not safety wired as illustrated in the [Service Bulletin] SB."

After cleaning the accessory case, he inspected the threads where the oil filter adapter threaded into it and did not notice any damage. He indicated he would go back to Atlanta Air Salvage and would call me later with more details.

The call end time was not recorded.

Inspector Pless contacted NTSB on the same day at 1125 EST from the same phone number. He indicated that there were no smeared threads of the accessory case where the oil filter adapter threaded into, but there was some damaged threads of the adapter.

The call end time was not recorded.

The digest was reviewed with him during the calls and he agreed to the content.