

Robert Gretz
Senior Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

Date: 4/11/22

Subject: ERA22LA186

Contact: Russell Standifur, FAA BNA FSDO

Mr. Standifur was interviewed via telephone. He observed substantial damage to the right wing and fuselage. Mr. Standifur stated that adequate fuel remained onboard and was drained by first responders due to a potential environmental hazard. He observed that the fuel bowl was about 3/4 full of fuel and the fuel was absent of visible contamination. He checked the air intake, and it was free of obstructions. Additionally, the propeller rotated without any binding. Mr. Standifur does not know the cause of loss of engine power. I stated that I would hire a mechanic to further examine the engine.

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Date: 4/27/22

Subject: ERA22LA186

Contact: Russell Standifur, FAA BNA FSDO

Mr. Standifur was interviewed via telephone. The pilot reported that he experienced a similar event several months ago at cruise altitude. The airplane experienced a partial loss of engine power, but the pilot was able to restore it. The pilot brought the airplane to Arion Aircraft, Shelbyville, TN, which is also a Jabiru Service Center. A mechanic at Arion, Jason Biggs, troubleshooted and was unable to find the cause; however, the fuel pressure transducer was not set up to the Dynon cockpit display and there was no way to read fuel pressure from the cockpit instrumentation. When asked how he checked fuel pressure, Mr. Biggs stated that he started and ran the engine, which required enough fuel pressure.

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Date: 1/5/23

Subject: ERA22LA186

Contact: Barry Richardson, Butler, TN

Mr. Richardson was interviewed via telephone. He believes that the engine-driven fuel pump, electric boost pump, and fuel pressure sensor were the original equipment on the airplane as he had never changed them out. The fuel pressure never displayed on the Dynon display and he assumed that it was never setup correctly. The airplane had experienced one other total loss of engine power, a few months prior to the accident. He was at cruise flight when the engine lost all power; however, the propeller kept windmilling and he was able to restore power. He does not remember everything that he did to restore power, but he remembers switching fuel tanks and the engine regained power. He immediately brought the airplane to the kit manufacturer for troubleshooting; however, the cause of the power loss was never determined.

Prior to the accident, he added fuel to the airplane and remembers that the auxiliary pump was on. During takeoff, while airborne, the engine lost and regained power, followed by a total power loss and the propeller did not windmill. He was concerned that colliding with a fence at that end of the runway would result in a more severe accident and he attempted to glide over it; however, the airplane stalled about 10 feet in the air and impacted the ground. Mr. Richardson added that in retrospect, he should have rejected the takeoff at the first loss of engine power.