



MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Aaron McCarter
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

Date and Time: July 8, 2022

Person Contacted: Pilot/Owner: Eric Miller @ [REDACTED]

NTSB Accident Number: ERA22LA268

RE: Telephone call to discuss details surrounding the accident

Narrative:

Briefly spoke of the confusion surrounding NTSB 830 and the reporting of accidents in a timely manner. The FAA was unsure which FSDO was going to be handling this accident. That's why there was such a long time between the accident and the reporting.

During the local flight which was about 45 minutes long between takeoff and landing, he felt and heard a significant vibration coming from the engine.

He immediately turned around and headed back to the private airport and some open fields he had just passed. The engine was still running strong, but the vibration remained. He noticed that his coolant and oil temperature were increasing very fast. The engine is a Viking which is a Honda engine; experimental.

He decided to continue to the airport because the engine was still operating but he feared a loss of engine power because he surmised that he lost his coolant or his oil because the temperatures were pegged.

When he got to the airport, he didn't want to waste time in the pattern in case the engine stopped so he landed straight in on a grass area. It was tall grass. When the airplane touched down, it immediately went forward and stopped very quickly. It caused some damage to the propeller and the airframe.

He is an A&P mechanic and decided to troubleshoot the issue after taking his airplane back to his hanger. Immediately he noticed that the gearbox damper unit or spider as some call it had failed catastrophically. One of the flange pieces where it connects to a pin was missing and it must have thrown shrapnel into the radiator because the radiator was badly damaged. That's why he lost all his coolant.

He thinks that Viking engines has had a series of these type of failures as discovered on owner/operator web boards. He will send me the web links for further review.

[END]