



NTSB MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

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Date: June 29, 2022, July 12, 2022, November 1, 2022
Person Contacted: WILLIAM CRANFORD (PILOT IN COMMAND)
NTSB Accident Number: ERA22LA291

Narrative:

The individual noted above provided the following information via a telephone call. The below contents are a summary of what was reported:

- He recalled that the engine was operating at 2300 RPM in an enroute descent, and it suddenly dropped down to 1500 RPM. The fuel pump was ON. He recalled that he was operating from both main tanks selected ON. The mixture was rich.
- The engine did not sputter, the power just "rolled back."
- He declared an emergency with air traffic control and requested vectors to the nearest airport.
- He turned 180° and saw Warm Springs Airport. He thought that he was "way high" for the runway ahead. In this 180° turn, all of a sudden, the engine went down to IDLE. After the turn was made, the propeller stopped turning. He pitched for best glide speed of 100 kts.
- He also pulled the power lever all the back in the glide/ power-off descent. He started to pull the mixture back as well but could not recall if he pulled it all the way back.
- He saw a road to land on and attempted to slow the airplane down. The airplane struck trees on landing. He recalled that the sink rate was something he had never experienced before. It was nothing like what he had previously trained for.
- He believed that "worst case scenario" the airplane should have had about 45 minutes of reserve fuel. He recalled smelling fuel during the flight but did not think anything of it. He said that this occurred while he was over open ocean and the flight path made him uneasy. There were no abnormal fuel or engine indications during the flight.
- He recalled that the fuel flow was 13 gallons per hour enroute and 12.8 in the descent.
- When he departed his home airport of KCCO on June 23, Thursday, he reported that there was 65 gallons of fuel on-board. He recalled that the main tanks were



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full, and he added 5 gallons to the right tip tank from fuel that he had in his hangar.

- He recalled that he paid for 10 gallons to be added to the airplane, two different times while he was at Clearwater Airport. He could not recall where the fuel was added (Tip vs Main Tanks). He recalled that 14 gallons a side were added at Williston Airport during the weekend as well.¹
- He could not recall adding carburetor heat during the engine trouble and subsequent loss of engine power.
- The descent was from 8,000 to 5,000 ft msl. He recalled that he was slowly enriching the mixture during descent and the carburetor heat was OFF. He had just made comment to his passenger about how well the engine was running during the flight.
- Prior to the power loss, he had the engine set to 2300 RPM, 23 Inches manifold pressure.
- He recalled that part of the loss of altitude was him trying to lose altitude to not overshoot the runway ahead when the engine was producing partial power. However, when the engine lost all power, it became apparent that he did not have the glide range to make the airport.
- He clarified that for about 15-20 seconds, he thought he was "way high", so he intentionally bled altitude.

On July 12, 2022, the pilot reported the following circumstances in a second telephone call. Below is a summary of what was reported:

- He recalled that he had been cleared from 8,000 to 5,000 ft msl. He had switched to main tanks during the descent.
- He had been operating the engine throughout the accident flight with the Right Main Tank ON, and the Left main Tank OFF, and vice a versa. He cannot remember the order immediately preceding the loss of power, but he did recall that he selected both tanks to the main ON position for the descent. He was not operating from the tip tanks at all during the flight.
- It was his normal habit to turn the fuel pump ON and switch the tanks to both MAIN ON before the descent.
- The engine un-commanded, reduced from about 2300RPM to 1500 RPM in the enroute descent from 8000-5000 ft msl. He recalled that it ran for 3 minutes at 1500 RPM. It was running at a "smooth 1500 RPM."

¹ The investigation obtained fuel receipts that was consistent with this report. Over the weekend of flying, 10 gallons of fuel was added to the airplane at Clearwater two separate days and 28.2 gallons was added at Williston Airport. Copies of the receipts are located in the public docket.



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- He recalled that when he departed KCCO on June 23, there was about 3 gallons in the right tip tank and a couple of gallons in the left tip tank. The main tanks were completely full. This was about 65 gallons.
- He reported that when departing for the accident flight from Clearwater Airport, the fuel was not topped off. He recalled that he put his finger into the main tanks, and it was near his finger.
- The gauges would read a little low on this airplane. He recalled that they read about 1/4 fuel on both mains after the accident. He believed that the FAA told him this.
- He utilized the fuel flow monitor for rate burning and did not reset the total balance before departures. It was not his practice to use the fuel flow monitor as a total fuel calculator.
- He does not remember that he did apply carburetor heat during the flight and does not remember thinking about carburetor heat after the engine trouble began.
- The mixture was full rich, and the fuel pump was ON during the engine troubleshooting.

The following email statement was provided by the pilot on July 12, 2022.

On June 26, 2022 I was traveling from KPIE to KCCO on an IFR flight plan at 8000 ft. At approximately 20 miles from KCCO, I was directed to descend from 8000' to 5000' and contact ATL approach on 119.8. Approximately 1 minute after checking in with ATL approach, the engine RPM's dropped from 2350 to 1500. I immediately turned on fuel pump, enriched the fuel mixture to full rich, verified both fuel tanks were in the ON position and scanned the gauges to which everything else seemed normal. At that time, approximately 30 seconds later, I reported engine problems to ATC, asked for the closest airport and declared an emergency. I was then vectored to a 180 Heading and advised that 5A9 would be 7 miles ahead on that heading. I established a visual for Runway 18 and at that time had the altitude to make the field while the plane continued along at 1500 RPM's. Approximately 3 minutes, after the initial check in with ATC, the engine RPM's dropped from 1500 to 500 and then 2 seconds later to zero. At the point, I realized a glide to runway 18 was not going to be possible. I set up a speed for best glide, approximately 100 kts and located a field at my 11:00 position. As I approached the field, not only did I see power lines



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and hay bales, but also realized I did not have the glide for that option either. I then focused on what appeared to be an old logging road that was boot legged in shape, and I did my best to put the airplane on that road.

On November 1, 2022, the following statement was additionally provided by the pilot:

On June 26, 2022 I was traveling from KPIE to KCCO on an IFR flight plan at 8000 ft. At approximately 20 miles from KCCO, I was directed to descend from 8000' to 5000' and contact ATL approach on 119.8. Approximately 1 minute after checking in with ATL approach, the engine RPM's dropped from 2350 to 1500. I immediately turned on fuel pump, enriched the fuel mixture to full rich, verified both fuel tanks were in the ON position and scanned the gauges to which everything else seemed normal. At that time, approximately 30 seconds later, I reported engine problems to ATC, asked for the closest airport and declared an emergency. I was then vectored to a 180 Heading and advised that 5A9 would be 7 miles ahead on that heading. I established a visual for Runway 18 and at that time had the altitude to make the field while the plane continued along at 1500 RPM's. Approximately 3 minutes, after the initial check in with ATC, the engine RPM's dropped from 1500 to 500 and then 2 seconds later to zero. At the point, I realized a glide to runway 18 was not going to be possible. I set up a speed for best glide, approximately 100 kts and located a field at my 11:00 position. As I approached the field, not only did I see power lines and hay bales, but also realized I did not have the glide for that option either. I then focused on what appeared to be an old logging road that was boot legged in shape, and I did my best to put the airplane on that road.

The NTSB's preliminary report, in the second paragraph, states: "He reported that he believed he was too high to descend toward the runway at best glide airspeed and started to descend at a faster rate." The report goes on to say: "He recalled maneuvering toward a road, however, the airplane impacted a wooded area about 1.5 miles north of runway 18."

However, my written report stated: "I set up a speed for best glide, approximately 100 kts and located a field at my 11:00 position. As I approached the field, not only did I see power lines and hay bales, but also realized I did not have the glide for that option either. I then focused on what appeared to be an old logging road that was boot legged in shape, and I did my best to put the airplane on that road." I realize this is a preliminary report, but I want to clarify a few points. I really appreciate your willingness to address to my concerns and work together to make sure the record is as accurate as possible.



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Past Flights

Date	Departure	Arrival	Aircraft	Duration
Sunday 26-Jun-2022	11:53 EDT Clearwater Intl - PIE	14:28 EDT Newnan Coweta County - CCO	PA24	2h 35m
Saturday 25-Jun-2022	17:48 EDT Williston Muni - X60	18:32 EDT Clearwater Intl - PIE	PA24	0h 44m
Saturday 25-Jun-2022	11:08 EDT Clearwater Intl - PIE	11:50 EDT Williston Muni - X60	PA24	0h 42m
Thursday 23-Jun-2022	10:25 EDT Newnan Coweta County - CCO	12:33 EDT Clearwater Intl - PIE	PA24	2h 08m
Wednesday 01-Jun-2022	15:28 EDT Monroe County - MNV	16:33 EDT (?) Newnan Coweta County - CCO	PA24	1h 05m
Wednesday 01-Jun-2022	09:39 EDT Falcon Field - FFC	10:43 EDT Monroe County - MNV	PA24	1h 04m
Wednesday 01-Jun-2022	09:13 EDT Newnan Coweta County - CCO	09:21 EDT Falcon Field - FFC	PA24	0h 08m

Figure 1: View of publicly available FlightAware activity for the accident airplane.

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