



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Timothy W. Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: June 13, 2022
Person Contacted: Ronald Edward Awad
NTSB Accident Number: ERA22LA313

Narrative:

Mr. Ronald Awad was contacted by phone on June 13, 2022, at 1253 EDT. He was called at [REDACTED]. He provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED]

He holds a private pilot certificate with airplane single engine land rating and has an endorsement for gyroplane. His address is [REDACTED]

He indicated that the gyroplane belonged to a friend and it was transported with the main rotors off. The main rotors were installed and he added/mixed 90 or 91 octane non-ethanol fuel and 100 low lead fuel, totaling 5 gallons. The fuel gauge showed 1/4 fuel capacity before he added the 5 gallons of fuel. He then ran the engine on the ground with the mixture control full rich, the carburetor heat off, and the engine and propeller were "ok." He then performed a taxi test and was attempting to "crow hop" and did not intend to get airborne and fly in the traffic pattern. During one test the gyroplane became airborne and with not much runway remaining the gyroplane felt fine, so he continued the flight. The engine then lost total power and his options were to fly straight ahead into trees or turn towards the runway. The gyroplane impacted powerlines, then began descending.

He was asked the following:

Describe the power symptoms?

It was like he reached up and pulled the throttle to idle or turned off the magnetos. There was no engine surging, no back firing, no spitting and no sputtering. At the time of the loss of engine power he had his hand on the throttle and the magnetos were in the on position. The fuel pump was "running" and there was plenty of fuel on-board.

Postaccident, the gyroplane remained on its side for about 1 hour. During that time it sat with the fuel pump running because he left electrical power on. He added that the, “fuel cap was not very tight” and while on its side he smelled fuel, or a very strong smell of aviation fuel.

On June 14, 2022, he texted NTSB 4 photographs depicting foreign material in the inlet fitting of the fuel filter which nearly completely blocked the inlet (Figures 1 and 2). Subsequently on June 19, 2022, at 1454 EDT, he texted NTSB the following verbiage and also 4 photographs, “Went to airport today for a short visit and pulled the seat to get access to the fuel tank. Wanted to check for RTV in tank or around fuel sending unit. Sure enough there was silicone around the sending unit and a glob on the bottom of the tank under it. Probably been that way since the machine was built.” One photograph depicted the same orange sealant on the fuel tank sealing area for the fuel sending unit (Figure 3) and another photograph depicted the same orange sealant in the bottom of the fuel tank beneath the opening in the fuel tank where the fuel tank sending unit would be installed (Figure 4).



Figure 1: Digital Photograph From Pilot. View Depicting Foreign Object in Fuel Filter Inlet Fitting.



Figure 2: Digital Photograph From Pilot. View Depicting Foreign Object Removed From Fuel Filter Inlet.



Figure 3: Digital Photograph From Pilot. View Depicting The Fuel Tank Opening Where Fuel Sending Unit is Installed. Note The Similar Colored Sealant Found in the Fuel Filter Inlet.



Figure 4: Digital Photograph From Pilot. View Looking Inside The Fuel Tank. Note the Same Colored Material in the Bottom Of the Fuel Tank as Was Found in the Fuel Filter Inlet.

The call end time was not recorded.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on July 15, 2022. He replied on July 15, 2022, at 2122 EDT with, "I read the attachment and it pretty well sums things up. The zip code for my address is wrong, if that matters.... It should be [REDACTED]. Thank you, Ron Awad. The comments were incorporated into the narrative and the FINAL digest was e-mailed to him on July 18, 2022.