

7/18/2022

To: Dave Carreau

From Bill McEnery

Re: N8680V Incident of 7/17/2022

This is my statement regarding the incident involving myself, as pilot in command and N8680V of 7/17/2022. I will offer this statement in two parts. The first part, I will try to give a factual synopsis of the incident, and the second part I will give an overall explanation about my recollections and thoughts surrounding the incident. Hopefully the two will give a full picture of what transpired.

Factual:

On 7/17/22 at approximately 2020 local, my Bellanca 7KCAB, N8680V sustained major damage after exiting runway 32 at 42B, Goodspeed Airport. Myself and one passenger were the sole occupants of the airplane. Day, VFR meteorological conditions prevailed. Winds were calm, and sky cover was few at 2500'. I departed 42B for a brief, VFR scenic flight from runway 14. Departure went without incident. Once airborne, I check the KSNC AWOS for current weather. I continued south for approximately 5 miles and climbed to approximately 1500' MSL. After a few minutes of flight, I reversed course, and proceeded north for a return to 42B. I executed a straight-in approach to runway 32 at 42B. The plane touched down approximately 500' from the threshold. Shortly after touchdown, the plane began a steady veer to the left (west of runway 32). I attempted to correct the veering with right rudder. The airplane did not respond to my rudder inputs, so I added power. The plane departed the runway at approximately 1000' from the threshold and continued to veer left. At some point the right-side landing gear was overloaded and separated from the airplane. When the gear separated the plane's right wing impacted the ground. The plane came to a stop approximately 75' – 100' west of runway 14/32. The only injury sustain was a cut to side of my head. EMS treated with a wrap, and I later had the cut stapled closed at Middlesex Hospital, Marlborough Urgent Care facility. The passenger did not have any injuries. We self-extricated from the aircraft and waited for emergency crews to arrive.

Synopsis:

On 7/17/22, my wife and I were hosting some friends and I offered airplane rides to anyone interested in going. These flights were brief, just taking someone up to experience flight, see the scenery, and return. I think the 1st flight may have happened at around 17:00 local. For most of the day, winds were steady from 210, 7-10kts. Ceilings few around 2500'. I checked the Chester AWOS (118.32) at the start of each flight, and the 42B wind sock showed Runway 14 as the preferred runway. Consequently, I was

using runway 14 for most of the day. All the previous flights were uneventful, and people were enjoying themselves. I believe I had conducted 6 prior departures and landings. On the final incident flight, prior to departure, I back taxied runway 14, and noticed the windsock was showing calm winds. I have the habit of cross checking the sock with a flag across the Connecticut river (to the west of the airport). The flag was showing no wind. I thought to myself, perfect. "I'll depart south, return north, and put the plane away."

I departed, quickly checked weather at Chester, flew south, reversed course around Gillette's Castle and then planned for a straight in approach to runway 32. All was fine. Calm winds so I configured for approach speed of about 75MPH indicated. Touch down felt good. The plane started veering to the left, and think I just reacted slow. When realized my correction was not working, I added power expecting to lift off. That did not work. When the plane left the runway, the landing gear caught something, and the plane lurched over hard.

Everything with the plane was working correctly. The only explanation I can give is my own lack of maintaining control. I made a mistake. I got lazy. In retrospect, I realize that I spent the entire late afternoon flying. I didn't stop for dinner or water. I did not feel tired, but I was fatigued. When the final person expressed an interest in going, I really should have said no. I am not sure if adding power was the right choice. Again, in retrospect it clearly was not. I had plenty of runway, so I probably should have just held the stick back and road it out.

After the plane came to a rest. We exited the plane. I was bleeding from my head. My passenger reported that he was fine, and suggested I sit down. Very quickly, local flight instructor approached the plane and help with securing the situation. He shut down the Mags, Master, and cut off the fuel. There was no evidence of any rupture to either fuel tank, and there was no strong odor of fuel present. He also called 911. I sat down and waited for the 1st responders to arrive. They arrived. Assessed the scene and did not find any cause for more action. I was treated on scene, and after things settled down, my wife drove me to get some stitches. At no point was I unconscious or dis-oriented. I do not know what caused the cut. Fortunately, we were both secured with full 5-point Hooker harnesses. If we were not, I think things would have been worse.

After FAA Inspector William Midwood conducted a review of the crash site, we de-fueled the airplane before moving it. We removed just under 20 gallons of fuel. Included with this statement, I have included a screen shot of the credit card charge for fuel purchased at Chester Airport, an Air Nave screen shot of Chester's current fuel price (\$7.94/gal!), and a picture of a page from our flight log (showing that we fueled 17.4 gal on 7/16). My wife filled the tanks on 7/16 in anticipation of flying 7/17. She recorded that the plane took 17.4 gallons of fuel and was charged \$138.11 (\$7.94/gal). After filling up, she returned to 42B (maybe .2 hrs of flight after fill up).

I hope this offers the information required to document the incident. If anyone has any questions or requires any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

William J. McEnery



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