



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

FAA Inspector Statement
Jeff Davis

On September 13, 2023, 1654 eastern daylight time, an Engineering and Research Corporation 415-C, N2796H, S/N 3421 was substantially damaged when it was involved in an accident near Fitzgerald, Georgia. The private pilot was fatally injured, and the passenger was seriously injured.

After verification of the aircraft "N" number, I used the FAA SPAS to validate owner / registration of the aircraft. There was no current record for the aircraft. I then used the FAA General "N" number search and found that the registration was not current, and the "N" number had expired.

After verification of who was onboard, SPAS showed the owner of the aircraft held a private pilot certificate, the passenger held a student certificate.

September 14, 2023, Inspector James Manning and I arrived at the Fitzgerald airport (FGZ). We met with the airport manager, he stated he knew the pilot involved in the accident and he did not think the aircraft had flown recently. He had also stated that the aircraft was for sale, he had the aircraft logs books until a few days before the accident in which the owner had picked them up. He stated the flight was performed for a potential buyer of the aircraft. The airport manager was asked if he could retrieve recent fuel purchase data for the accident aircraft. The pilot had purchased 10.89 gal September 11, 2023. He also provided daily fuel sampling and inspection records for the proceeding weeks. He stated that he witnessed the takeoff of the aircraft. He noticed what he thought was minor misfire but cleared up after takeoff. He left the airport for the day and was notified of the crash minutes later when he arrived home.

When we arrived at the accident site, it was secured by members of the Fitzgerald Police Department. The aircraft impacted a city street perpendicular to the road and impacted a shallow ditch. From testimony of witnesses taken before our arrival, it appears the occupants were thrown from the aircraft. The pilot of the aircraft came to rest in front of the right-wing leading edge and the passenger came to rest uphill about 20 feet in front of the aircraft. According to the placement and condition of the seatbelts, it did not appear they were in use during the flight. The seat belts were checked on site and found to be attached to the airframe and seemed to be in serviceable condition. While we were at the scene, we obtained logs and records for the aircraft. NTSB Investigator Timothy Monville arrived, and we began supporting him in his investigation. Continuity of the flight controls were verified from just behind the cockpit seats to the evaluators and rudders. Once pictures were taken and items of interest were documented Atlanta Air Salvage arrived and removed the aircraft. Before we left the scene, NTSB Investigator interviewed a witness. The witness, who was in her home at time of the accident, reported hearing the engine operating and attributed the airplane to be flying low because of the sound. She then heard the engine quit followed by the sound of impact. She did not witness the impact.

Inspector Manning, Investigator Monville, and I reviewed the aircraft records when we returned to the airport. It was noted that the last record of an Annual Inspection was complied with February 2, 2006, ACTT 1659.22 / Tach 1362.87. We met with the Airport Manager to gain access to the hangar where the aircraft was kept. We all walked to the hangar, and it appeared that some aircraft servicing had taken place due oil containers in the trash can, Investigator Monville documented with photographs. On the way back to the terminal, Investigator Monville spoke to a mechanic who reported that the pilot came over and cleaned spark plugs the day prior to the accident but did not know if he flew that day. After speaking to the mechanic, Investigator Monville and Inspector Manning drove on the taxiway to gain a perspective of the ground roll of the aircraft prior to the accident. The airport manager directed us as to the position on the runway where the aircraft becoming airborne.

Inspection was completed of the fuel servicing area. The area was kept clean, and the filters were clearly marked with date change and due dates. The Airport Manager was asked to perform a fuel sample. .5 gal of fuel was dispensed into a white bucket, several black particles were noted, and he stated it would classify the clarity as 2A. He also stated if those particles were noted, he would sump until 1A was achieved. After fuel sampling was complete, we completed a debrief with the NTSB Investigator and turned over evidence including aircraft logs and the cell phones of the pilot and passenger.

JEFFREY
M DAVIS

Digitally signed by
JEFFREY M DAVIS
Date: 2023.10.16
13:42:45 -04'00'



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Aviation Safety

FAA/ATL FSDO-11

College Park, GA

Inspector Statement

Date: 11/08/2023

**Subject: A&P/IA Record of
Conversation/Interview**

Contact: Samuel Gentry

This interview was conducted in reference to an aircraft accident #ERA23FA370 that occurred on September 13, 2023, about 1655 eastern daylight time, an Engineering and Research Corporation 415-C, N2796H, was substantially damaged near Fitzgerald, Georgia.

Mr. Charles Adon Clark was interviewed by telephone on Friday November 03, 2023 at 11:05 AM.

Mr. Clark holds an Airframe and Powerplant (A&P) mechanic certificate & Inspection Authorization Airman Certificate Number

Mr. Charles Adon Clark was asked the following questions and provided the following answers:

Q1. Have you ever performed any repairs or maintenance on aircraft N2796H?

A1. Mr. Clark responded, "I have never performed any work on aircraft N2796H."

Q2. Have you ever performed any previous or recent annual inspections on aircraft N2796H?

A2. Mr. Clark responded, "I have never performed any annual inspection on aircraft N2796H."

Q3. Did you have any written or verbal agreements with the owner of aircraft N2796H to perform an annual inspection on aircraft N2796H?

A4. Mr. Clark responded, "I did not have any written or verbal agreement with the owner of aircraft N2796H to perform an annual inspection on aircraft N2796H."

SAMUEL G
GENTRY

Digitally signed by
SAMUEL G GENTRY
Date: 2023.11.08
09:04:50 -05'00'