

Accident Statement

Arrived at NAFC to fly N1867H in accordance with Holdshort schedule.

Obtained logbook and key and inspected logbook and confirmed that it was within flight hours and dates for 50 and 100 hours, etc.

Phoned FSS and filed flight plan for departure and return and obtained weather on eastern shore of Maryland and for KGED (Georgetown).

Went out to aircraft to remove covers, etc. and performed pre-flight in accordance with checklist. Noticed some frost on aircraft and performed de-icing per requirements. Contacted Potomac for frequency and squawk. Set up and checked cockpit for flight. Obtained Lee Annapolis weather and altimeter setting. Performed "Before Engine Starting" and "Starting Engine When Cold" checklists. Started engine and set and checked all required items. Taxied in accordance with "Taxiing Checklist" stopping prior to taxiway parallel to runway. Performed ground checks according to checklist. All items were in the parameters of the checklist and I did not notice anything out of the ordinary. Performed "Before Takeoff" checklist. Stowed checklist and in accordance with my habit reran the checklist visually to confirm that I had set all the required items. Checked for traffic, checked my mobile phone for time of takeoff, rechecked traffic, made departure radio call and taxied onto runway.

Upon lineup on the runway, set the heading indicator in accordance with the runway, added power and checked all gauges and flight items. Confirmed wind with windsock, set controls, released brakes and proceed to takeoff. Takeoff run seemed to be normal. Confirmed air speed at approximately 50 knots. Increased to 55 knots and proceeded liftoff. Conducted standard departure for runway 30. Using my pilot experience on climb out, checked air speed for retracting flaps (70 knots). Checked airspeed and altitude with airspeed showing approximately 65 and altitude approximately 500 feet. I visually checked the airspace allowing the aircraft to increase to 70 knots so I could retract the flaps. Upon looking back at the air speed, I noticed it was slightly below 60 and decreasing. No flight parameters changed between airspeed of 65 and the decrease to below 60. My

best indication was that the engine lost power. I did not feel any unusual vibration or hear any noise.

Upon noticing the decrease in airspeed, I pushed the nose over. I looked to see which way was best to turn back to the runway and I descended to gain more airspeed. I made a left turn back and noticed that I was at an altitude that, in my opinion, would not clear the trees. Decided to fly down the gap of Beard's Creek to avoid houses and any obstacles. I navigated the Creek at a very low altitude. I was approaching the boats and boat docks and I was below the top of the mast levels of some of the boats. I perceived that the right wing was close to the boats. The last airspeed I recall seeing was 40 knots. I felt the main landing gear make a very violent contact with the ice. The next thing I remember was the aircraft coming to a stop and ice and water coming up to the windscreen. I immediately moved to the co-pilot's seat, undid the latches on the door and got out of the plane.

Stephen Couchman

3 January 2023