



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

Aviation Safety

Tampa Flight Standards District Office

Tampa, Florida

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April 5, 2023

Mr. Timothy Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
[REDACTED]
Washington, DC [REDACTED]

Dear Mr. Monville:

I traveled to Florida Air Recovery & Storage (FARS) in Jacksonville, FL to do an assessment and take pictures of aircraft N4811E NTSB ID ERA23LA153. The aircraft suffered an accident on January 31, 2023 at the X60 airfield.

I arrived at the FARS facility around 1140 hours on April 4, 2023. From my observations I could see the damage on the front/bottom and top of the vertical stabilizer, the right wing tip and small damage to the left wing tip. Also damage to the canopy, and the nose and prop and the landing gear. Upon examination of the canopy I noticed the left side of the canopy frame was damage and the Plexiglas was destroyed. The handle used to lower the canopy was at an angle, the latch system looked engaged. Comparing the pictures from the accident site to the pictures taken at FARS, the position of the latching system looks different. At the accident site it looked disengage but at FARS it looks engaged. The latching system seems to work fine. With assistance from FARS personnel I was able to lower the canopy, only the right side was able to be inserted in the correct position and to engage with the latching system. The left side would not go in due the damage sustained during the crash. The right side of the latching system engaged perfectly, and I could not disengage it by pulling up on the canopy. The handle that is used to lower the canopy was also working, it was easy to maneuver and when the canopy was lowered and the latching mechanism engaged, the handle could be positioned to assist in keeping down the canopy. One item of note is that the pistons that push the canopy open are very strong and that if the canopy wasn't properly engaged the canopy could push open because of the pistons.

FARS personnel removed the cowlings/fairing from the bottom of the vertical stabilizer. This revealed that the vertical stabilizer structure had separated from the top of the aircraft (video).

I left the facility around 1300 hours.

Bases on my visual observations, I believe the latching system was/is working fine. When properly latched the canopy was impossible to open using manual force.

Ismael Reyes

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Ismael G. Reyes

Aviation Safety Inspector, Tampa FSDO