

Timothy W. Monville
Sr. Air Safety Investigator
OAS-Eastern Region Aviation

Date: May 20, 2023

Subject: ERA23LA241, Record of Conversation/Interview

Contact: Benjamin D. Burril

Mr. Benjamin D. Burril was contacted by phone on May 20, 2023 at 1850 EDT. He was called at [REDACTED] and left a voice mail message. He returned the call the same day from the same phone number at 1858 EDT. NTSB added FAA inspector Bruce Codwise onto the call. Mr. Burril provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED]

At the beginning of the interview he was advised that the NTSB is a federal agency mandated by Congress to investigate aircraft accidents, and NTSB has no authority to take any action against any individual. He was also informed that the purpose of an NTSB investigation is for safety only, and any person NTSB talks with has the right to representation; he agreed to the interview without representation.

He was advised by e-mail when sending this document for review that it will not be released to the public until the investigation is finished and when published, any personal identifiable information (PII) such as cell phone number, e-mail address, address, pilot certificate number, etc., will be redacted and not viewable in the released document.

He holds a private pilot certificate, certificate number of [REDACTED], with airplane single engine land and instrument airplane ratings. He Has Basic Med Issued July 10, 2022. He has an estimated 4,000 to 5,000 hours total time and over 370 hours in make and model.

He was asked by NTSB the following –

Explain the flight?

He departed from Anson County Airport – Jeff Cloud Field (AFP), Wadesboro, North Carolina about 1630 EDT with about 15 gallons in each wing fuel tank and departed to the northwest. He flew about 30 miles, then a fuel pressure light went out and the engine quit. He turned around, changed the fuel pump, switched to the right tank, and the engine restarted. He assumed at that time there was blockage of the left tank. About 6 to 7 minutes after he got the engine restarted, the

fuel pump light went out, and the engine quit again. He maneuvered for a field to perform a forced landing but approaching the field the flight encountered a downdraft. One gear contacted the tree top, and the airplane spun into the ground.

NTSB Questions Continued –

What is the fuel tank capacity in each wing?
30 gallons.

How did you determine the 15 gallons of fuel?
He put non-ethanol fuel into the fiberglass wet wing fuel tanks.

How much fuel did you add to each wing fuel tank?
He added 15 gallons of fuel into the left fuel tank which had about 5 gallons, and added 10 gallons into the right tank which had about 10 gallons. He had more than enough fuel for the intended flight.

Explain how he changed the fuel pump?
His airplane has a switch with 1 or 2 for either electrical fuel pump.

What engine is installed?
A Corvette LS3.

Do you suspect fuel pump failure?
He designed the airplane. The green light indicated that the electrical fuel pump was electrically operating. After the engine quit the 2nd time he did not troubleshoot and just flew the airplane.

What altitude were you at when the engine quit the 1st time?
He was flying between 3,300 and 3,400 ft msl.

What altitude were you at when the engine quit the 2nd time?
He does not recall.

What airport identifier did you depart from?
KAFP

What airport identifier were you flying to?
KMRN

Did you have a flight plan filed?
No. He was flying to MRN to see a friend.

NTSB Questions Continued –

What was your injury?

He broke 4 toes on his left foot and has scrapes.

Does the engine have a mechanical fuel pump?

No it does not. The fuel routing is:

Fuel tank>Fuel Selector>Fuel Pump>Pressure Filter with Return>Fuel Rails. The engine fuel system operates at 45 psi, and any fuel pressure greater than that at the fuel pump is returned.

Where is the pickup for the fuel pump light?

At the inlet of the fuel pump. The light tells if the pump is electrically operating.

Have you done any recent work to the fuel system?

No. He built the airplane himself and has operated it about 375 hours with no engine or fuel system issues.

Where will you take the airplane to?

AFP. He was advised that other than recovery nothing was to be done to the airplane without consulting with NTSB and FAA.

FAA Questions –

What is the fuel burn in cruise flight?

66 pounds-per-hour.

Where does he get his fuel from?

He buys 93 octane ethanol free fuel from Whit S Convenience Store in Wadesboro, NC.

The call ended at 1934 EDT.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on May 20, 2023. He replied the next day at 1913 EDT with, “Mr Monville, I received your email and pdf file. I will review and recommend any changes if needed. Thanks for your and Mr Codwise prompt address to this matter. Sorry for any inconvenience. Ben Burril.” The digest was e-mailed again for him to review of August 28, 2023. He replied the same day at 0949 EDT with, “Without my notes in front of me. That as I best can remember is what we discussed, and seemed accurate at the time.” The FINAL digest was e-mailed to him on August 28, 2023.