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Date: February 28, 2024
Subject: ERA24LA124 Passenger Interview
Contact: Gavin Copenhaver

Gavin Copenhaver was contacted via telephone to discuss the accident of N485DA. The following is a summary of the conversation.

Mr. Copenhaver stated that they were going up to do a quick flight and that he was in the back seat. As they were coming into land, they were initially lined up for Runway 9R but then they "side stepped" to 9, which is a smaller runway. He noticed that they were starting to get a little low and that they were losing airspeed. He watched as the instructor began to add power. Mr. Copenhaver commented that his "coms" were going "in and out" during the flight so he could not hear the exchanges between the pilot receiving instruction and the instructor during the approach. As the instructor added power, he stated that it felt "laggy" and that they had then lost the engine.

He described hitting the ground hard and sliding before they went into the grass. They quickly exited the airplane because there were flames visible. He commented that they hit a parked Piper Archer, but they did not realize that until they had exited the airplane and saw it on the ramp.

Mr. Copenhaver was asked to describe the power loss. He described that when the instructor went to add power, he pushed the throttle forward, but it didn't feel like the engine gained any RPM or responded to the input. Mr. Copenhaver then said it felt like they were falling quickly. It was difficult to hear the engine power because he was wearing a noise cancelling Bose headset, but he knew they were losing altitude.

Mr. Copenhaver was asked if the engine totally stopped or if they just had a power loss. He responded that he thinks it "failed, totally stopped" and that they just

dropped. He was asked how high the airplane was on the approach when the engine quit, but he was unsure of their altitude.

Mr. Copenhaver was asked to confirm who the flight instructor was and replied that it was Onzem. He did not have contact information for Onzem. He was then asked if he had contact information for Alan and he replied with the phone number [REDACTED] but that he did not have an email address for him. He commented that he thought Alan was released from the hospital the night before.

Mr. Copenhaver was asked why he was onboard for the instructional flight. He replied that he was observing the flight and that you must have a certain amount of observation hours in the program. 10 hours in the air and 5 on the ground.

-End of conversation