

Daniel Boggs
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

Date: 3/18/24

Subject: ERA24LA144

Contact: William Papich, Pilot

Mr. Papich was interviewed by telephone.

Mr. Papich stated that his brother flew from the Fly in Ranches Airport (FD25), Vero Beach, Florida to Lakeland Linder International Airport (LAL), Lakeland, Florida and landed about 1000 on 3/14/24. Around 1430, they departed for FD25 when at a cruise altitude of 2,500 ft. smoke came into the cockpit and the engine noise changed. Shortly afterwards, the engine lost all power and he looked for a field to make an emergency landing. During landing, the airplane touched down in soft sand and the landing gear dug into the ground and the airplane nosed over. They egressed out of the airplane and the airplane caught fire. After the fire was put out, he noticed the exhaust pipe was missing and the welds were fractured.