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Subject: ERA241LA243, FAA witness telephone interview and airplane inspection

Contact: Eric Muro, FAA Inspector-Tampa Flight Standards

The digest below was emailed to the NTSB IIC for review. In a conversation with the FAA inspector, he noted that no anomalies were observed during the airplane inspection. Inspector Muro also interviewed a neighbor, who is a flight instructor, and the neighbor confirmed that the engine sounded normal. Additionally, the neighbor stated that it seemed the pilot never regained control of the airplane after takeoff.

"I just got off the phone with a neighbor that witnessed it, he is a long-time flight instructor, aircraft mechanic and IA. He said the engine sounded really good, he just thought that the pilot never had control of the aircraft. He said that particular experimental is supposed to have an 85-horsepower engine in it and they had an O-320 in it, so it had quite a bit more than normal."

"What is left of the aircraft is here at my community, at his hangar, in McAlpin, FL. Based on the condition of the propellor, it was definitely under power at the time of impact. The only anomaly that I saw was that he stated that he had approximately 9 gallons of fuel in the tank at the time of take-off. Once he was removed from the wreckage, (the wreckage was upside down), I was able to access the main fuel shutoff directly under the fuel tank, and I shut it off. I thought it was strange that there was 100% zero fuel odor at all while the aircraft was upside down. Upon moving it to the hangar, I open the fuel cap, which was on pretty tight, and I saw MAYBE 2 gallons of fuel remaining in the tank. There was continuity in the aileron flight controls, and because the tail section was basically sheared off, that is the only check I was able to perform as far that is concerned. The engine looked clean and well maintained. The

pilot did speak at length to having problems with one of the magnetos (which he stated that he eventually figured out) as well as having the prop sent back out to Sensenich to have it re-pitched slightly. I believe that prior to all this, and what prompted all of the maintenance, was that the engine had a slight "miss" to it, and he had the carb sent out, new plugs and wires installed as well. According to the pilot though, at the time of this accident, he had that all fixed."