

Adam M. Gerhardt
Senior Aviation Accident Investigator
Office of Aviation Safety, Eastern Region

Date: June 12, 2024
Subject: NTSB# ERA24LA251
Contact: Loren Noggle (Pilot in Command)

The individual noted above provided the following information via telephone conversation. The below contents are a summary of what was reported:

- He departed about 7:20PM local time from KOKZ Airport (Kaolin Field Airport, Sandersville, Georgia). It was a normal departure and climb out from runway 31.
- He climbed to 2,500 ft msl and flew northeast. He completed a turn around a point. He then flew northwest to fly over his home and a family farm. He performed a few circles over the house and farm.
- He then picked a heading to fly back to OKZ airport. He planned to enter the traffic pattern for runway 31.
- He was near the town, level flight, in cruise flight about 2,500 ft. He then noticed that the airplane's "nose starts drifting down."
- He moved the control stick and there was "nothing" for elevator control.
- He immediately could tell that, "Elevator control authority was lost." The ailerons still functioned.
- He reduced power, and the airplane entered a steeper descent. He then reached to tighten his left and right shoulder harnesses to make sure he was strapped in as tight as possible.
- He then recalled that as the speed increased, the airplane's pitch began to increase somewhat, and the nose came up some. He then applied a little power to see if the nose would come up further, but he then reduced power quickly as the airplane continued to descend.

- He recalled veering to the right to avoid a house and then saw a large tree and decided to hit the top of the tree to dissipate the energy.
- The airplane impacted the tree and subsequently terrain. He was able to exit the airplane on his own.
- He recalled with regard to elevator control, "there was nothing to the stick feel."
- When he lost elevator control authority, he was about 2,500 ft in cruise flight, about 80-90 knots. He did not look at the airspeed indicator after the loss of control authority.
- After the accident, he was informed by personnel that worked at the airport, who assisted with recovering the airplane back to the airport, that the rod and bearing that connects to the stick assembly was missing a bolt and it had become disconnected. The area was under the control stick.
- The pilot reported that the bolt had a locknut on it, and it should not have come off.
- He performed a condition inspection himself earlier in the year. He did not remove this bolt and does not know how it would have come off. He performed a fuel line swap during this most recent inspection. He recalled that in the March - April 2024 timeframe, the conditional inspection was completed.
- He cannot locate the maintenance records¹.
- He did not hold a repairman certificate.

#END#

¹ The investigation made repeated requests for the maintenance records. The pilot was unable to locate the logbooks.