



MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Aaron McCarter
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

Date and Time: July 29, 2024
Person Contacted: Pilot: Nikolas W. Kehr @ [REDACTED] about 1145.
NTSB Accident Number: ERA24LA299

RE: Discussed the circumstances of the accident

Narrative:

Woke up, built banners. Had been flying all day long. The accident flight, preflight and runup with mag check was good. Nothing abnormal. It was a large banner/logo combo, and it was a hot day. Flew from the Ocean City inlet up the coast to Rehoboth Delaware.

Once the run was over, climbed up to about 1,200 feet on way back down south and noticed the oil temp was high during the tow when he was near the town of Bethany. Radioed in and spoke to Chris, the owner's son who stated its ok, "I've flown with it that hot before."

Was unable to maintain altitude and was slowly descending. Could not maintain 1,000 ft. Pushed everything full forward and was barely making 50 fpm. Airplane continued to descend. Spoke with other pilots who relayed what was going on to operations.

Once descended to 700/800 ft elected to drop the banner in a field. Engine began shaking and the rpm continued to drop. Elected to make a forced landing in what appeared to be a good field, but it was residential and "I didn't want to chance hitting someone on 4th of July, so elected another field that was covered with brush." The engine quit. Thought the field would be suitable as was used to descending over trees and other various obstacles during banner pickups. Was also forced to make a landing in the tops of the trees as the engine restarted.

Once impacted the brush/trees, the airplane dropped inverted about 8/10 ft and came to rest on its back. No fire, shut everything down. Minor injury, dislocated shoulder. Passerby assisted followed by EMS personnel. [END]