

Joshua Young
Air Safety Investigator
AS-ERA

Date: 8/26/2024

Subject: ERA24LA355, Pilot Interview

Contact: Elden Yates, Owner/Builder/Pilot

Mr. Yates was contacted by phone by the IIC on August 21, 2024, and August 26, 2024. Mr. Yates provided a description of the accident and answered some questions asked by the IIC. Below is a summary of those conversations:

- After taking off the pilot was on his second lap of the airport traffic pattern when he saw a puff of white smoke near the rudder pedals.
- He decided to make a precautionary landing, during his approach he noticed he was high and continued the approach.
- Near the ground and in the flare the engine lost power but the airplane continued to float, touching down about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way down the 1800 ft grass runway.
- Approaching the end of the runway, which drops into a river the pilot elected to force a "ground loop" to remain out of the river.
- The airplane impacted a bank, the pilot was able to evacuate the airplane and the airplane was taken to a hangar.
- When asked when he lost power the pilot responded saying he lost power at the runway about 20 ft above ground level.

- The pilot stated the smoke seen was a puff of white indicative of burned coolant.
- The pilot was asked if he had been able to identify the source of the coolant leak, he said it looked as though the coolant had been pushed through the radiator cap as there was residual coolant around the cap.
- He stated that this could happen if the rotor coolant seal had been compromised and compression was being pushed into the coolant system leading to an over pressurization.
- Mr. Yates was thanked for his time and help with the investigation.