



Investigator Name: Leah D. Read
Title: Sr. ASI
Division: ERA

Date: September 24, 2024

Subject: ERA24LA359

Contact: Austin Batten, pilot

Mr. Batten stated that he was familiar with the accident airplane and had flown it on numerous occasions prior to his long country flight from Florida to New Hampshire. He said the airplane's fuel caps can be tricky to install; so, as a ritual, he would install the caps, remove them, then re-install to make sure each cap was properly secured. Mr. Batten stated that at the last fuel stop prior to the accident, he self-served the airplane with fuel and made sure he secured both fuel caps.

Mr. Batten said that there were no previous mechanical issues with the fuel caps. He did notice on a previous leg of the trip that there was some play in one of the fuel caps, but it had remained securely installed during the flight.

Mr. Batten did not disagree that the left fuel cap came off in flight. He just did not know why or how it came off.

End