

Federal Aviation Administration

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On 2/3/25 the CFI was conducting flight instruction with a student who was on his second flight. The internet was down, and the CFI was unable to check the maintenance status of the aircraft, so he assumed it was good. The CFI pulled the aircraft out of the hanger and failed to conduct a proper preflight, not realizing the aircraft was taken out of service for maintenance. The CFI told the student that he had conducted the preflight of the aircraft. The CFI and student departed KCKV and climbed to 3000 feet. About a minute after level off the engine cowling detached and blocked the view of the CFI and student. The CFI declared an emergency with Fort Campbell approach and returned to KCKV. The CFI initiated the approach and landing to runway 17. The air touched down hard and exited the runway with the left wing and tail striking the ground. The left wing sustained damage to left aileron, bending it upwards, and the left wing spar bent upwards. No damage to the tail or other flight surfaces were noted.

During the investigation, the engine cowling was able to be placed back on the aircraft with only 50% of the fasteners could be secured. The fasteners that could not be secured failed to secure due to receivers being worn. The operator stated they had video footage from the flight school showing that N62112 was not preflighted and was pulled out of the hanger and preceded to conduct flight operations.