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Aviation Accident Investigator
Eastern

Date: February 27, 2025 @ 0921 cst

Subject: ERA25LA114

Contact: Don Stanton Chief pilot
MidTn Aviation Academy


E-mail summary of communications with the Chief Pilot discussing the circumstances leading up to the accident. The NTSB IIC (McCarter) requested that the Chief Pilot (Stanton) provide him with some documentation and answers to questions about procedures and policy.

- Send written procedure about pilots/instructors removing airplanes while under maintenance.
- Is there a formal policy or procedure for checking out an airplane?
- Provide a copy of the video showing the pilot/instructor during the "preflight" and any part of the engine start and taxi afterwards.
- Confirm the oil cannot be checked with an oil flap. How does someone check the oil level?

The Chief Pilot responded with the following.

"The normal procedure to ck out our planes is to go to flight schedule pro and check its availability. To see if anyone else has it scheduled. On this particular situation we had removed the top cowling to repair the oil flap. We just set the top cowling on top of the engine and did not put any screws back on it. It was late in the day and I forgot to take it out of service on Flight schedule pro because our internet was down.

I thought that anyone doing a proper preflight would see that none of the screws were in place. His preflight was just walk around without checking anything. Did not

check oil at all and if he would have he would have seen the top cowling was just setting there to keep any FOD from getting into the engine.

I know that according to regulations that the PIC is the final authority to determine the airworthiness of the aircraft prior to flight.

There is no way to check the oil with the oil Ck flap being broke without removing the cowling. He admitted that he did not ck the oil at all. I told him that the normal oil consumption on this plane is 1 qt every 4 hrs but that did not mean to ck the oil only every 4 hrs.

The policy is now and always has been to do a complete preflight prior to each flight. He is an instructor with a second hour student is to go through a preflight every time to teach the student the proper preflight so that they know what to look for. He told the student he had done the preflight and just went to flying the airplane.

I will try and get the video to you when I get back to the hangar and download it. He also told me he did not due a proper preflight."

[END]