



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

All persons listed were interviewed by Zoë Keliher

The following is a summary of conversation:

DON MORGAN (FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION)

I called Aviat and they said they could not find a definitive reason for engine surging. Therefore, we are going to counsel the pilot....in detail....The pilot was offered Remedial Training and completed all as required for this accident. I am unsure if Husky ever did a report or not.

MIKE LATTIN, PILOT

Understand instruction and will keep you informed what is going on. I have not heard from salvage company yet? Below is my best effort to describe what transpired the afternoon of the accident. I HAVE LOCATED AIRCRAFT LOG BOOKS AND THEY ARE AVAILABLE ANY TIME FOR INSPECTION.

The following is a detailed statement regarding precautionary Landing on January 27, 2017 at approximately 16:45 P.S.T. I am not able to offer an explanation as to why the engine ran rough? We may know more once Lycoming completes their inspection? I believe my son Eric had a similar experience in the airplane a few months back and his wife was with him and it upset her to the point that she is now reluctant to fly in this particular airplane. I will see what I can find out more information.

Weather was clear with approximately 8 to 10 knot wind from the southwest, forecast to remain the same into the early evening. Flight was to be conducted VFR. Note the aircraft came out of annual by Mountain West Aviation on December 7th, 2016 and had been flown 1 time prior to this flight on January 1st, 2017. The flight on January 1st was conducted in the pattern as "test" flight by me to verify everything was okay to return to service. Basically a double check that things were in order after the annual was done. Everything checked out to my satisfaction after flying for approximately 1 hour in the pattern doing a number of touch and goes for practice.

On January 27th the weather had been checked prior to departure on CSC Duats using my account, and the flight was determined possible maintaining VFR conditions. I had been planning a trip to KSUN and was periodically checking the enroute weather which also provided the local weather at KEKO.

Purpose of flight was pleasure and aerial observation to see how much snow there was and looking for fresh horse tracks made by my neighbors missing horses. I departed KEKO planning a 1 hour flight, returning to Elko with no landing planned other than on return to KEKO.

Zoë Keliher
Air Safety Investigator
Western Pacific Region

I personally performed a preflight inspection and found no deficiencies.(1) the oil level was 7 quarts and fuel was full. I had topped the aircraft sometime Wednesday so my son could fly to Ely the next day, which did not happen due to weather. We by fuel direct and fuel out of our tracks. With the cold weather we had been experiencing some truck problems but had worked on the 100 LL truck recently and thought we had the problems corrected. Based upon testing fuel from the bottom of the tank there was no water present. The Tanis Engine heater had been plugged in two days/nights before. I had plugged the airplane in at my son's request.(2)

I then boarded the aircraft and checked fuel selector valve was "ON", cowl flaps OPEN and fastened the 5 point restraint system and started the aircraft, waited to oil temperature to reach 100 degrees F, conducted the standard run up as described in the POH. (3) I listened to AWOS, set the altimeter, announced my intentions over Unicom (123.0) and departed runway 24 at KEKO at approximately 16:30 P.S.T. in Husky 382US. I made a left cross wind departure planning to fly a heading of approximately 150 magnetic to Mitchell Creek which is approximately 45 nautical miles southeasterly of KEKO . This route would end up taking me over the runway at the Corta Ranch which I use extensively during the summer months to commute to and from town. I try to stay on the ranch when we are haying.

After flying 10 to 12 minutes I was over the Harrison Pass road on the north boundary of the Little Ranch at an estimated altitude of around 7000 +/- feet MSL or somewhere around 1000 feet AGL. For reasons unknown at that time the engine began to run rough (engine RPM surging 2 or 3 times. I did not observe any abnormalities in the engine monitoring equipment such as oil pressure and temperature, CHT, EGT and/or fuel flow.

I was approximately 2 miles from the approach end and lined up with a snow covered dirt strip on the Corta ranch. After a brief analysis of my options I decided best course of action under the circumstances was to attempt a "soft field" landing on the snow covered runway located on property which was owned by my family. I was not certain of the snow depth but felt it was likely I could land without injury to myself with the aircraft sustaining only minor damage. After reducing power to land I don't recall experiencing further roughness or surging of the engine. I estimate that from the time the engine started running rough until I was on the ground was less than 5 minutes.

After touching down the aircraft slid approximately 100 feet on the snow and then suddenly the nose went into the snow at an estimated speed of 25 knots and the aircraft stopped and then flipped over. Once it landed upside down there was no further movement. The landing of the airplane on its wings when I flipped was very soft do to the cushioning of the snow. There were no injuries of any nature sustained by me. Prior to exiting the airplane I shut the fuel and master switch off and undid my seat belt. After I was out of the plane I took 3 or 4 photographs with my I phone and proceed to walk to my house which was a little over a mile to the northeast. At that time I realized the snow was approximately 24 to 30 inches deep. When I arrived at the house I found the phone(land line) was out of service and I didn't have reliable service. I texted my wife and sons what happened and that I was alright and would be spending the night. I also asked my son, Eric, to close the hangar door since I would not be back in town for a while.

The reason for the precautionary landing was to allow an AP to come check the aircraft out to determine what was causing the roughness or power surging and correct the problem before further flight. My position is if at all possible I would rather diagnose the problem on the ground rather than in the air. An individual's life and wellbeing is higher priority than damage to an aircraft. An aircraft is easily replaced, but my three kids father and wife's husband is not!

The next morning my son texted me to advise that an ELT was being picked up. I had forgot to check the ELT after the accident but it had been active. I got ahold of the Elko County Sheriff and told them that I had turned it off. The seat belt air bags did deploy.

FOOT NOTES:

1. After the accident I discovered there was no current registration in the aircraft. I had always assumed the registration was in the plastic packet that contained the Air Worthiness Certificate?
2. Leaving the heater plugged in for this period of time was a departure from my standard SOP in that I normally don't leave plugged in for more than 24 hours.
3. With the exception of exercising the prop at 1600 RPM instead of the recommended 1900, I have been advised to do this over the years to avoid excess stress on the prop and governor.

Mike Lattin, PIC