



INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Elliott Simpson
Aviation Accident Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Interview Date: June 12, 2017
Person Contacted: Chris Tappen, [REDACTED]
NTSB Accident Number: WPR17LA114

Narrative:

During a telephone conversation, Mr. Tappen stated the following:

He is the builder and previous owner of N399DG.

Sated that the toe-in adjustment noted in the logbooks required removal of the brake assembly (including the three hex bolts) and installation of shims at the wheel axle mounting points. He could not recall if he had used safety wire to secure the hex bolts, or if he had ever used safety wire for their retention in the past. He further reported that the master cylinders were replaced because he encountered a loss of brake effectiveness in the right brake, which could be overcome by "pumping" the right pedal.

He installed an ELT and completed a series of repairs and upgrades including the replacement of the brake master cylinders, adjustment of the main landing gear camber and toe-in, (due to uneven tire wear), along with modifications to the avionics system.

He stated that all the work, except for the ELT installation, had in fact been completed prior to the conditional inspection, but that he did not record the entry until one week later. He preemptively performed the work, knowing that it would not pass inspection.

Did not do any work to brake system after the conditional inspection. Flew the airplane for about 3 hours following conditional ,including with the mechanic.



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Interview Date: June 21, 2017
Person Contacted: Samuel Robinson, Mechanic – [REDACTED]
NTSB Accident Number: WPR17LA114

Narrative:

During a telephone conversation, Mr. Robinson stated the following:

He performed the conditional inspection of N399DG, and completed an inspection report.

He could not specifically recall if he checked for safety wire as he looks at many airplanes, although he did advise the builder of multiple other components that needed to be safety wired around the airplane. He did not adjust the airplane's camber or toe-in, this had already been completed by the airplane's builder.

He did not approve the airplane for flight after the conditional inspection because no ELT was installed. He also advised the builder of cracked air line cracks behind the instrument panel. The builder subsequently installed an ELT, and this was the only item he examined during the follow up examination prior to certifying the airplane as airworthy. He then went for a test flight with the builder, and the airplane flew well.



INTERVIEW SUMMARY

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Interview Date: May 31, 2017
Person Contacted: BRUCE FRANKLIN ANDERSON, [REDACTED]
NTSB Accident Number: WPR17LA114

Narrative:

During a telephone conversation, Mr. Anderson stated the following:

Bought the airplane the prior Friday in Tennessee. Made multiple flights at that time, including a checkout by the builder after the prebuy/conditional inspection.

Builder told Bruce that he had just replaced both master cylinders before the conditional, because the brakes "didn't feel right".

After purchasing, flew back to Thun field with multiple stops enroute. The landing at Burley, Idaho during the return was uneventful, however during taxi the right brake would not hold, so he could only turn the airplane left. The next day he checked the brakes and could not duplicate the problem. He examined the brake system and all was in order. He flew it back to Thun without incident.

He flew the airplane at Thun the day prior to the accident, and then changed the engine oil.

On the day of the accident, he continued to familiarize himself with the airplane systems prior to the flight. He planned to perform one flight in the pattern. The flight was uneventful, and the landing was the best he had done so far.

On the day of the accident, he planned to fly the airplane in the traffic pattern. He continued to familiarize himself with the airplane's systems prior to the flight, performed a preflight inspection, and reported that during the engine ground-run he checked the brakes, and they held. Additionally, the taxi route from his hangar to the runway required multiple right turns. The takeoff, climbout, and landing approach were uneventful, and he touched down just beyond the runway numbers, at an airspeed of 82 knots. He applied pressure to the combination rudder/brake foot pedals to slow the airplane down, and once it had reached about 35 knots, the resistance in the right pedal suddenly dropped, and the pedal moved to almost full travel.

The airplane immediately veered to the left, and the pilot released pressure on the left pedal. He began to "pump" the right pedal in an attempt to regain braking action, but the airplane did not slow down. As the airplane approached a runway light, the pilot applied left pedal pressure, and the airplane veered left, departed the runway, and struck the fence.