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Office of Aviation Safety - Western Pacific Region

Date: July 14, 2022

Subject: WPR22LA242

Contact: Kevin Kaher - Pilot

During a telephone conversation, Mr. Kaher reported that he had the Continental C-85 engine replaced with a Continental Motors O-200. The airplane's annual inspection had just been completed, and was flown from the Anderson, California, area to San Carlos, utilizing the right fuel tank.

Prior to the accident flight, he conducted a preflight inspection. During takeoff, everything was fine, until about 400 ft above ground level, when engine power started to reduce. Mr. Kaher said that he glanced down and saw the engine RPM about 1,800, and decided to turn downwind. Mr. Kaher stated that the engine RPM continued to diminish, and he tried to return to the airport and land on runway 12. Following the turn to the runway, he felt onset of the stall, applied left rudder, and decreased back pressure, while the airplane was descending at a steep angle. The airplane subsequently landed on an airport perimeter fence, bounced, struck a fence, and came to rest upright.

Mr. Kaher said that his passenger and himself exited the airplane and saw people running toward them. He observed fuel pouring out of the right wing fuel line, and turned off the fuel selector valve, but did not touch the master or magneto switch before the fire department showed up.

Mr. Kaher recalled that prior to takeoff, he did an engine run up to 1,800 rpm, checked mags, didn't notice anything abnormal. Mr. Kaher thought that the engine could have been due to a plugged vent and that the engine initially didn't lose all power.