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Sr. Air Safety Investigator
Office of Aviation Safety – Western Pacific Region

All persons listed were interviewed by NTSB personnel:

The following is a summary of conversations:

FRANK SETZLER (CHANDLER AVIATION)

I was involved with performing any requested action along with one other assistant under the supervision of the SDL FSDO personnel on site.

The only place where fuel was apparent was when we were requested to remove the lower most fuel system drain valves from what I believe is a one-gallon hopper tank at the root of each wing that receives fuel directly from the fuel tanks. We were all expecting and prepared to see fuel pour out of here when each drain valve was removed. We had only a trace of fuel come out of each of the two hopper tanks. There was no indication of any fuel in the airplane from my perspective. To answer your question, the fuel was exhausted at the time of our requested service. The fuel system only allows you to draw fuel from one or the other tank at a time. Meaning one tank would have run dry before the other. When entering the plane, I observed the fuel selector in the "left" position. This system has no method of selecting both fuel tanks for the engine to draw from.

October 13th: Verify gear locked down and tow A/C from customer's location to service facility. Secure area and airplane with traffic barricades and "Do Not Cross" tape.

All exam activities was performed as requested and in the presence of Brian Mehrtens, FAA Scottsdale FSDO. October 16th: Prep aircraft to de-fuel and static ground. Remove fwd engine cowling. Due to damaged metal, not all components could be fully reinstalled. Remove several pounds of dirt from lower engine compartment.

Disconnect fuel supply line from firewall supply hose to engine driven fuel pump. No observed wetness in line when disconnected. Connect clean flexible fuel line from hose previously connected to engine driven fuel pump, adding +/- 6 feet to length of hose. Place hose into statically grounded 5 gallon container with calibrated one gallon markings present. Activate battery master switch and verify gear down indications. Activate LT & RT fuel boost pump, high and low. No fuel observed coming from aircraft to engine. NOTE: When battery master switch is selected on, no fuel indication noted on gauge. Verify no obviously pulled or "popped" circuit breakers observed. Remove fuel sump drains from left and right hopper tanks. Only +/- 6oz of fuel flowed out as

Frank was disconnecting drain fittings. Reinstall header tank "quick drains". Re-assemble disconnected items and re-cowl as possible with damaged components. Confirm master switch is off.

Shovel up and sweep dirt debris from lower cowling that had dropped on ramp. Lock cabin door and tow aircraft to previous location. Cabin keys marked and placed in lock box. Note No "return to service" provided for any service performed assisting Mr. Brian Mehrtens. Owner is responsible to determine that all interior components, cowling and inspection panels are installed, and aircraft is the condition it was when it arrived. The owner of the plane delivered the set of keys.

BRIAN MEHRTENS (FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION)

The pilot think there should have been 32.9 gallons aboard at the time of the crash based on their records. FAA inspector Gary Hendrickson responded to on scene and said with battery power on, the JPI had 32 gals but the airplane's fuel gauges read zero. He drained about 1/2 gal of fuel from each tank and said the tanks were intact. (note he could not continue draining fuel because his container was full. Said he could not visually determine fuel level but heard no sloshes when the wing was moved back and forth. However, Pilot said fuel checked ok at preflight and the fuel log he had looked good. The last time the airplane appeared to be topped off was in March, 2023.