



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Investigator: Brian C. Rayner
Senior Air Safety Investigator
NTSB - Eastern Region

Date: August 19, 2019
Subject: William Stiver - Pilot
NTSB Accident Number: ERA20LA036 Venice, Florida

Narrative:

Mr. Stiver was the pilot/co-owner/operator of the accident airplane. He was interviewed by telephone, and the following is a summary of the interview.

Private pilot/single engine land/complex endorsement/no instrument rating. 1,000 total time
Maybe 40-50 in make and model.

The purpose of the flight was to go help a friend with his boat in The Bahamas. The passenger was a marine captain.

I had filed for a 0845 takeoff and about 0910 and watching the ceilings and when they got to "VFR" we took off, I didn't like what I saw, so we returned. We stayed at the airport restaurant while we waited on the weather. Terminal forecasts were better than the METARS.

At 1230, we got in the aircraft, taxied out with no indications of any problems, and taxied out to runway 05. I stopped the airplane to do my run-up, and as I pulled up, the right brake didn't feel right. I said we would do a circle and test these brakes. I didn't turn right, so I turned left, and added power to test the brakes at a higher than normal speed and as I brought the airplane to a stop, we smelled smoke and then saw smoke. My passenger jumped out and screamed "Fire!" I said I would grab the fire extinguisher, and he said, "NO! Get the hell out of there!"

"When I jumped out the fire was going from the right wheel pant across the belly, and it was just a mess. What I expected was maybe a brake caliper smoking, but not a fire. The brake didn't work right, and I said, 'Sh*t, the caliper is stuck.' I'm an auto mechanic, and you know, you see calipers get stuck, debris and moisture get in there..."

Mr. Stiver said he'd had no brake problems in the 1.5 years he's been involved with the airplane. He did not know if any brake work had been done during that time. He reviewed the maintenance records while he was on the phone and found no history of brake work since he was involved with the ownership of the airplane.

According to Mr. Stiver, when the airplane reached the hold-short line for runway 05 the right side "didn't feel right." I just did a left circle to test the brakes. No smell. The first taxi, no smell, but then the 360, but then I went faster toward the hold short line and that's when the brake failed. The left [brake] had something but that's when the right failed. Then, I tried the emergency brake, but it didn't work, and the airplane went past the hold-short line to the point where it ended up.