



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

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Date: April - August, 2016
Person Contacted: Yuliy Gerchikov
NTSB Accident Number: WPR16LA096

Narrative:

During a series of email correspondences, Mr. Gerchikov stated the following:

The engine was not run at the last annual. It was last run on the ground and for self-launch on August 20, 2015. It was last run in the air (with in-flight start) on October 17, 2015. Both runs were nominal.

[the engine] it was winterized, but not at annual. Instead, it was after the last flight of the previous season, in the fall of 2015. (...sometime in November.)

And yes, that's the procedure -- except for draining the fuel tank. I left the tank full (topped off) for what passes as winter in California. Then at the annual in April I removed the intake and exhaust covers and turned engine several turns by hand to check for smooth operation and to re-lubricate cylinders.

I retracted the engine already on the ground -- or, rather, in the tree -- when I was securing the glider before I left. When extended, the engine, mast and prop are delicate -- if the wind were to flip the glider (or if cows from nearby field took interest in it) it could be easily damaged. I shut off the fuel valve, retracted the engine, raised landing gear, turned electric master switch off, put on canopy cover and covered Pitot tube.

Both extension and retraction take 12-14 seconds in each direction.... It takes time to align prop to vertical (automatic retraction won't work otherwise) or activate manual override (two switch flips). So retracting it once I realized that I am landing short would take longer than I had. Also, my priority at that point was avoiding power lines, poles and fences -- all things that are known to slice equally easily through canopies as well as through their occupants.