



## RECORD OF CONVERSATION

**Timothy W. Monville**  
**Sr. Air Safety Investigator**  
**Eastern Region**

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**Date: December 8, 2014**  
**Person Contacted: Thomas Bonds**  
**NTSB Accident Number: ERA13LA407**

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### Narrative:

Mr. Bonds was contacted by phone on September 10, 2013, at 1238 EDT. A voice mail message could not be left at his number of [REDACTED]. He returned the call the same day at 1259 EDT from [REDACTED] noting a missed call.

He stated that he has owned the airplane for about 10 years, and keeps it in a hangar at GAD Airport. The airplane is equipped with a 49 gallon fuel tank in each wing; the total fuel capacity is 98 gallons. It is also equipped with the auto gear extender system, and on the accident flight he had a portable GPS with him. He stated that there has not been any recent work done to the airplane, and when asked he stated his last flight in it was either June, July, or August 2012. He was asked if he would operate the engine because of the length between flights and he said that about every couple of months he would start the engine, let it warm up to normal operating temperature, and taxi the airplane around exercising the airplane's systems.

His total flight time is between 550 and 590 hours, and he estimates that he has between 225 and 230 hours in the accident airplane. He provided a date of birth of [REDACTED], an e-mail address of [REDACTED], and a work phone number of [REDACTED]. His last flight review was in February 2011, and his medical certificate was not current.

He provided the following timeline:

September 7, 2013.

He went to GAD Airport and noticed the battery was dead. He applied jumper cables to the battery and started the engine, taxied the airplane, then secured it and hosed the exterior down with water. He then put the airplane back into the hangar and removed the aircraft's battery and took it home where he placed it on a charger.

September 8, 2013-

The weather was VFR. He arrived at GAD about 1500, installed the battery and did a normal preflight which included checking the fuel for contaminants. He checked each wing tank sump drain and the fuel low point beneath the wing by pulling the drain inside the airplane and letting the fluid flow onto the ground which he then checked to see if there was any water; there was none. When asked if he used a checklist he stated he had one in his hand but went from memory. He reported that each tank had about 20 gallons by the gauge indication and he visually inspected the fuel tanks.

When the passenger (Mr. Wade) arrived they got into the airplane; Mr. Bonds was in the left seat and Mr. Wade was in the right seat. Both were wearing the seatbelt but neither were wearing the installed shoulder harness. He did not file a flight plan or obtain a preflight weather briefing for the local sightseeing flight.

The flight departed about 1600 with the fuel selector positioned to the left tank, and flew around locally over Mr. Wade's house, then flew North to Gunterville, then flew over the lake. There was a slight haze, so he decided to return to GAD. When he was near 8A1, or about 40 to 45 minutes into the flight, he switched the fuel selector to the right tank. About 15 minutes after switching tanks, while flying at 3,800 feet, with the engine operating at 2,250 to 2,300 rpm, the manifold pressure between 22 and 23 inches, and the mixture leaned 75 degrees rich of peak, operating approximately 15 gallons-per-hour, the engine quit suddenly but the propeller continued to rotate; there was no sputtering. He glanced at the fuel pressure and it was still in the normal range. At that point he was flying in a southerly direction and was 3 to 4 miles northeast of 8A1. He turned to the right to fly to 8A1, and immediately switched tanks, and turned on the auxiliary fuel pump, but engine power was not restored. He pitched to maintain 120 miles-per-hour (mph) and flew towards 8A1. He switched tanks 3 to 4 times in an effort to restore engine power but with no effect.

When near 8A1, he called in on the CTAF and advised he would be attempting an emergency landing. The winds favored runway 21, and was on approach to that runway with the flaps retracted when the airplane slowed to the point that the auto extend system caused the landing gear to extend, which he was not planning for at that point. He estimated the airplane at that point was  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile from the approach end of runway 21. He thought about attempting to retract the gear but thought he better fly the airplane; he did move the landing gear selector to the down position. Unable to reach the runway he landed the airplane in the water about 100 yards from land. The airspeed at touchdown was 70 mph, and the airplane did not go inverted at touchdown. He further stated that if the gear had not come out automatically at that point, he felt he could have landed on land. The airplane came to rest in 3 to 4 feet of water north of the airport. He estimated the time of the accident was 1700.

His injuries include a scratch to his right cheek, and Mr. Wade sustained a scratch to the top of his head.

Mr. Wade can be reached at [REDACTED]

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on September 11, 2013, about 0846 EDT, and he replied the same day at 1344 EDT, with, “Mr. Monville I agree with your notes, but could you correct one thing on page 2 paragraph 3 17 gallons per hour to approximately 15 gallons per hour.”

The notes were corrected to reflect the comment from the pilot.



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**Date: December 5, 2014**  
**Person Contacted: Todd Thaxton, of Atlanta Air Salvage**  
**NTSB Accident Number: ERA13LA407**

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### Narrative:

Mr. Todd Thaxton of Atlanta Air Salvage contacted NTSB on September 10, 2013, at 1501 EDT. He called from [REDACTED]

He stated that the right wing was bucked, and contained approximately 12 gallons with no water. He reported the left wing spars were broken, but the wing remained attached by the flight control cables. He was asked to quantify the amount of fuel remaining in the left wing and advised he would.

He responded by e-mail on September 11, 2013, at 0903 EDT, indicating, "Tim, We got about 6 gallons of fuel from the left wing. I'm sure it had more in it because the tank was ruptured and it was full of water. There is also a handheld GPS in the aircraft. I will give Clay a call as soon as we get back to the shop. Todd Thaxton Atlanta Air Recovery"

The digest was reviewed with him during the phone conversation and he agreed with the content.



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**Date: December 5, 2014**  
**Person Contacted: FAA Inspector Clay Perkins**  
**NTSB Accident Number: ERA13LA407**

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### **Narrative:**

FAA Inspector Clay Perkins contacted NTSB on September 12, 2013, at 1051 EDT. He called from [REDACTED]

He stated that he inspected the engine and noted the single drive dual magneto was separated from the accessory case. There was no nut on the bottom stud and the threads were not damaged. With respect to the top stud, the ear was broken off and the nut was still attached. He indicated that the mag drive came out of the coupler and oil was noted on the exterior bottom fuselage skin. There were no other engine anomalies noted.

The digest was reviewed with him during the phone conversation and he agreed with the content.