

TOTAL PERFORMANCE
VAN'S AIRCRAFT

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May 21, 2014

Re: Input from Van's Aircraft, Inc. about June 18, 2013 accident of Van's RV-12 N666BE.

Attn: Leah Yeager, NTSB

Dear Ms. Yeager, I spoke with our engineering crew regarding Mr. Earl's letter to the FAA. Van's Aircraft has not done specific testing on the behavior of the canopy during an in-flight canopy opening. To that extent, we're not able to contest Mr. Earl's claim that the canopy moved to the fully open/vertical position during this incident. There may be aerodynamic conditions that we are not aware of that could cause this.

We do have a reasonable amount of field experience with tip-up style canopies opening in flight on our other models (RV-6/6A, RV-7/7A and RV-9/9A) and with other incidents of RV-12 canopies opening in flight without loss of control. While the extent that a canopy tends to open will vary with airspeed, it is our experience that a tip-up canopy will open to a point where aerodynamic equilibrium is reached...at which point the canopy's position will stabilize. We've not experienced nor ever had a report from the field (other than Mr. Earl's) of pitch authority being affected during a canopy open situation on any of our models.

The canopy handle on an RV-12 moves out of reach of average sized pilots at a position just over 1/3rd of fully open and is completely out of reach for even the tallest pilots when the canopy is half open.

Regarding Mr. Earl's request to amend the "cause of the accident"...Van's Aircraft would like to note that the canopy would not have opened in flight had it been latched correctly prior to take-off.

Regards,
Scott Risan
President
Van's Aircraft, Inc.