

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: ERA23LA262 Charlotte, NC Searey, N2440S
Date: Friday, July 14, 2023 7:32:47 PM
Attachments: [REDACTED]

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Hi Brian, I have added commentary below on your statements. I have also taken a quick video in reference to statement #4. Let me know if you have further questions.

Upon my earlier note in regards to selling the airplane, I have an airplane manufacturer who would like to purchase the airplane and pickup on Tuesday with their truck and trailer. I mentioned to him after your email today that I can't release it yet. His intent to purchase would have to happen prior to Oshkosh probably no later than Wednesday July 19th, but ideally wants to pickup this Tuesday July 18th.. If at all possible I just wanted to make you aware in the event that you may be able to accommodate this sale, but understand you do have a process. He did say that the airplane will be in Deland Florida in which it could still be inspected if required.

Also, due to the attachment size, can you verify you have received this email?

Have a nice weekend,

Jack Hunt
[REDACTED]

On Fri, Jul 14, 2023 at 5:04 PM Rayner Brian [REDACTED] wrote:

Mr. Hunt, good afternoon,

I am unable to reach Mr. Newsome at this time.

My understanding is that Mr. Newsome and Mr. Paskevich inspected your airplane in your presence. Their findings were these.

1. *There was a gascolator within the fuel system that you were not aware of until after the accident, and you stated that was the case.** It was not discovered there was a gascolator installed under the wing until the wings were removed from the aircraft. The gascolator did not have a placard indicitaing there was one present, either. The logs for the aircraft also do not indicate an installation of one. The*

airplane is equipped (standard) with a hand bulb pump attached to the pickup in the fuel tank. The procedure to remove water from the fuel system is to open the valve, then squeeze the bulb to remove moisture from the fuel as it is near the lowest point within the fuel system. This was done prior to each flight and the standard method on Seareys, to my understanding.

2. *The gascolator was found to be occluded with foreign objects and water during the inspection.* ****I agree with this statement. To me, it appeared to have a mix of rusty water and fuel within it.**
3. You stipulated that you were unaware of this gascolator within your fuel system prior to the accident, and after your previous engine power-loss event, its condition went undetected and the airplane was flown without its being inspected or cleared of water and/or debris. ****After the first time the engine lost power at Laney's Field, we used a transfer pump to remove and measure fuel from the fuel tank. We then used a borescope to inspect the pickup of the gas tank and check for debris and or damage covering the pickup. During that inspection the fuel tank was found to be perfectly clear of any debris. The fuel filter was removed as well, there was a very small amount of sediment discovered within the screen of the filter, but nothing that we felt would have caused a loss of power. Prior to flying the airplane again after the engine loss at Laney's (the first time), two Searey builders were also on site to help inspect the fuel system. I would at the time have deemed them to be qualified Searey Mechanics due to their history with building, and re-building Searey aircraft and knowledge of Rotax engines. We had, at the time, agreed that the tank may have ported with an estimated 4.5 gallons remaining in the 23 gallon tank that has 22 gallons usable, per the manufacturer.**
4. That once cleared of the water and debris, Mr. Paskevich wished to run the engine, but you resisted, because you feared further damage to the airplane. ****This statement is accurate, but to clarify; without the wings, wing struts, and rear stabilization cables attached, the engine has significant movement, side to side, I would say in excess of twelve inches. (Video attached). It clearly would have been careless and unsafe to try and start the engine knowing this. Once I showed the team that the engine had that much lateral movement, I had thought they were in agreement it would be unsafe to start. I also think that starting the engine could have caused more damage to the aircraft.**

Would you stipulate now to the above, and that the engine power loss events you experienced with your airplane were each due to the occluded gascolator? ****Given all of the facts and my knowledge of engine fundamentals and performance, my best guess at this point would be the gascolator could have caused loss of power in both referenced flights.**

Thank you,

Brian

Brian C. Rayner

Senior Air Safety Investigator

NTSB-ERA

[REDACTED]

Washington, DC 20594

[REDACTED]



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--

Jack Hunt

[REDACTED], [REDACTED]

Hobbytown - Mooresville, NC

[REDACTED]