

Lynn Spencer
Air Safety Investigator
Aviation Safety / Eastern Region

Date: November 20, 2023

Subject: ERA24LA043 Record of Conversation

Contact: Joseph Cosmides, pilot

The following is a record of conversation with Mr. Joseph Cosmides. Mr. Cosmides was interviewed by phone on November 20, 2023, at 1311EST. He was called at [REDACTED] and provided an e-mail address of [REDACTED].

At the beginning of the interview, he was advised that the NTSB is a federal agency mandated by Congress to investigate aircraft accidents, and NTSB has no authority to take any action against any individual. He was also informed that the purpose of an NTSB investigation is for safety only, and any person NTSB talks with has the right to representation; he agreed to the interview without representation.

At this stage of the conversation, he was advised that for transparency I would be typing the notes and would send to him for review and comment.

He was flying from New Mexico, where they have a house. He stopped for fuel about half-way home, at Coulter Field Airport (CFD) in Bryan, Texas. He purchased about half-tanks of fuel, checked the fuel, checked his oil, and continued his way. He climbed to about 11,500 ft and maintained that altitude to Florida. He had been hearing a noise for the last few flights from the back seat area, and this time he was able to track it to under the back seat. The airplane is pressurized, and that is where the pressurization control unit is located on the airplane. On the instrument panel there is a Cabin Pressure dump knob, so he pulled it out about half-way. He felt his ears pop but then the noise went away. He went to push it back in, but it did not re-pressurize the airplane. He then pulled it all the way out and it dumped all the cabin pressure. When he went to push it back in, the cabin pressurization still indicated 11,000 ft. He also noted that the cockpit vents and heating vents had stopped

blowing air when he had dumped the cabin pressure. Other than this, everything was fine with the airplane.

He had about 40 minutes of sunlight left when he noted a ceiling underneath him and started to look for a hole. Shortly thereafter, he got a bad feeling telling him to turn around, go north and find somewhere to land. He had auto-pilot (A/P) on, so he turned north and started to descend. He saw an opening and had selected a nearby airport, so he turned off the A/P and descended through the hole. He pulled out the power (not quite to idle, but to about 17) to get into the cloud opening. He descended through the opening rather steeply, levelled off under the cloud layer at about 2,000 ft and 10 miles from the Perry-Foley Airport (FPY) in Perry, Florida. He pushed in the throttle, and it seemed very easy to push in (less resistance than usual). Nothing happened. The engine continued to operate at the lower power setting. He pulled the throttle fully out expecting the engine to slow, but again, it stayed at the same power setting. He once again pushed in the throttle but there was no change to the engine. He switched fuel tanks and that did nothing. He enriched the mixture and that changed nothing. The airplane was rapidly decelerating, so he stopped trying to troubleshoot the engine issue and focused on finding a place for a forced landing. He made a 180° left turn to line up with a dirt road. He tried to maintain his glide speed and lowered his gear. He did not feel he could slow down enough to land on the road, and he looked to the right of the road and saw sapling pine trees, and he decided to go straight into those trees. He added full flaps, slowed to 71 kts, pulled the mixture to shut off the engine, and feathered the propeller then flew into the trees.

The next thing he knew, the airplane was upside down on the ground and the trees were all snapped, and he was sitting upright in the passenger seat. The front passenger window was already halfway broken, so he kicked it out the rest of the way and exited that way by pulling himself out. He could hear and smell fuel as he exited the wreckage. He stated that he did not recall the airplane flipping over, and he had been wearing a seatbelt at the time of the accident.

He walked out to the road and a truck stopped to assist.

The call ended at 1341 EST.

The digest was e-mailed to him for review on November 20, 2023. He replied on November 20, 2023, at 1443 EST with edits that were incorporated into the narrative. The corrected digest was e-mailed to him on November 21, 2023.

Lynn Spencer
Air Safety Investigator
Aviation Safety / Eastern Region

Date: March 27, 2024

Subject: ERA24LA043 Record of Conversation

Contact: Joseph Cosmides, pilot

The following is a record of conversation with Mr. Joseph Cosmides. Mr. Cosmides provided answers to follow-up questions on March 27, 2024, at 0945 EDT. He called from [REDACTED].

Q: When you levelled off and went to add power, did the engine stop producing power altogether? Would you describe it as a partial power loss? Complete power loss?

A: I'm a fairly low time pilot, so I have never experienced a windmilling propeller. Initially, I thought it was at idle because the propeller was still spinning, but now I believe I had a complete loss of engine power and the propeller simply continued to windmill.

Q: How long after you had pushed the throttle after levelling off did you pull it back?

A: Probably 4-5 seconds.

The call ended at 0947 EDT.