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Aviation Safety - Central Region

Date: June 3, 2024
Subject: CEN24LA194
Contact: Baton Rouge FSDO Inspector Marks

Inspector Marks sent the following information via email:

Accident 05/11/2024

N122LF, Skyraider II, Experimental. Aircraft Hobbs 631 hrs.

2 souls on board. Kenneth Soignier and Taylor Newland (pilot's grandson)

Accident site Location: [REDACTED] Breaux Bridge, LA.

Airstrip Departed: [REDACTED] Breaux Bridge, LA.

Airstrip owner: Pete Broussard. He will be the pilot's POC due to his injuries.

The aircraft will be stored in Mr. Broussard's T-hangar at the private airstrip.

Pilot: Kenneth Soignier, Cert # [REDACTED] contact no. Incapacitated at crash site.
Taken to Lafayette General. Was informed the pilot began breathing on his own
enroute to hospital.

05/12/2024 Pilot was in ICU in stable condition. Went in for surgery for broken arm.
Has fractured pelvis, spinal fracture, and small brain bleed.

05/20/2024 Pilot is awake and was responding to voice commands but was not
talking.

Passenger: Taylor Newland (pilot's grandson) No injuries. Contact no. [REDACTED]. Was supposed to provide a written statement. Has been contacted multiple times. Still hasn't provided anything.

FAA On site investigation:

Aircraft departed a private airstrip flew a heading of approx. 133 degrees for 2800 ft, contacting tree branches at approx. 30 ft in altitude with right wing. The aircraft spun 180 degrees with the tail rising with nose down attitude. (As stated by the passenger) The airplane then contacted the ground nose first with slight left wing lead. The aircraft sustained substantial damage. Fire Dept. arrived on scene. 3 Fuel tanks were removed from the aircraft due to leaking fuel. The pilot was incapacitated and was not responding to EMT's. He was extracted from the aircraft and transported via ambulance to Lafayette General Hospital. The passenger was on site and was uninjured.

The wings and all components of the empennage were in tack, attached, and accounted for. Continuity check from Controls (rudder pedals, control stick):

Left wing aileron-Verified positive continuity.

One diagonal left wing brace cable was detached with broomstrawing, indicative of overload fracture.

Right wing aileron- Verified positive continuity.

Flaps right and left- Verified positive continuity.

Rudder - Verified positive continuity.

Elevator- Verified positive continuity.

Throttle- Verified positive continuity.

Fuel tanks: 2 seven gallons, standard for this aircraft and an added five gallon gas can modified for the installation.

Condition as removed: All 3 tanks were approximately 1/3 full post leaking removal. Fuel was blueish in color. No noticeable physical ruptures on the tanks. All supply lines were cut by the fire Dept upon removal. Fuel hoses were blueish in color and flexible throughout the aircraft.

Engine: Visual inspection did not reveal any mechanical abnormalities. Did notice electrical tape on one of the spark plug caps.

Witnesses:

1. Passenger, Taylor Newland, stated that the engine sounded as it was running fine. They departed the airstrip and flew over the hwy. Mr. Newland said the pilot verbalized "This isn't good!" Mr. Taylor then stated the airplane contacted the tree branches with the right wing spinning 180 degrees and impacting the ground nose first. I asked Mr. Newland his weight and he stated he weighed 218 lbs. He also stated the pilot asked his weight also. Mr. Newland then said the pilot jokingly said, "Wow I weigh more than you!"

2. Airstrip Owner Pete Broussard watched the aircraft depart his private strip. He noted the aircraft engine sounded normal throughout the duration of the flight. He noticed the airplane was not gaining altitude once airborne and had to go under a powerline near the end of the runway. He watched the airplane still not gaining altitude, fly across the hwy. Mr. Broussard stated at the crash scene that the airplane was more than likely overweight. Mr. Soignier had topped off all three fuel tanks with AV-gas for the flight and Mr. Broussard questioned why so much fuel.

Conclusion: No notable contributing mechanical abnormalities. The total gross operating weight is in question. In need of performance data for this older Skyranger II.

Pilot weight	> 218 lbs
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Passenger weight	218 lbs
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20 gallons AV gas	
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@6lbs per gal	120 lbs
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Approx min weight	556 lbs
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END