



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Eric M. Gutierrez
Air Safety Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Date: July 18, 2022
Person Contacted: Devin Appelhanz (Airport Resident)
NTSB Accident Number: WPR22FA254

Narrative:

The following is a synopsis of the information provided by Mr. Appelhanz in an in person interview.

Mr. Appelhanz stated the on the day of the accident, he had spoken with the accident pilot. The accident pilot stated he was going to fly to an airport nearby for fuel. It was normal to see the accident pilot perform maneuvers when he departed, such as a wing over, then over fly the runway. He observed the accident airplane takeoff from runway 19, then enter a near vertical climb, slightly to the right. Suddenly, the airplane dropped/turned to the right and enter in a nose low, nearly vertical decent. The airplane looked like it was trying to pull up, maybe level the wing. However, the airplane continued to descend and impact terrain at the end of the runway. He and his father, responded to the accident location in an effort to provide assistance.



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Date: July 18, 2022
Person Contacted: Garrett Currie (Witness)
NTSB Accident Number: WPR22FA254

Narrative:

The following is a synopsis of the information provided by Mr. Currie in an in-person interview.

Mr. Currie stated that on July 16, 2022, while at his residence, just south of the Buena Terra Airport, Topeka, Kansas. At about 1150 local time, he and Mr. Birk observed a red and white airplane in a slight right, near vertical climb. When the airplane was about 150 ft to 200 ft, he heard the engine sputter. At the same time, the airplane appeared to pitch back, as if inverted, then enter a nose low, nearly vertical decent. As the airplane entered a nose low attitude, the airplane's engine was very loud, as if it were at full power. He did not see any smoke or anything else coming off the airplane that would seem abnormal. He lost sight of the airplane as it descended below the tree line. He then heard the airplane impact terrain. Mr. Birk then called 911 and reported the accident. He and Mr. Birk then responded to the accident location in an effort to provide assistance.

Additionally, Mr. Currie noted that it was not uncommon to observe the little red and white airplane performing various aerobatic maneuvers, such as, flying inverted, spins and barrel rolls. But at much higher altitudes.



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Date: July 18, 2022
Person Contacted: Dustin Birk (Witness)
NTSB Accident Number: WPR22FA254

Narrative:

The following is a synopsis of the information provided by Mr. Birk in an in-person interview.

Mr. Birk stated that on July 16, 2022, he was at a friend's residence, just south of the Buena Terra Airport, Topeka, Kansas. At about 1150 local time, he and Mr. Currie observed a red and white airplane in a slight right, near vertical climb. When the airplane was about 150 ft to 200 ft, he heard the engine sputter twice. Simultaneously, the airplane appeared to pitch back, as if inverted, and enter a nose low, nearly vertical decent. As the airplane entered a nose low attitude, the airplane's engine was very loud, like it was at full power. He did not see any smoke or anything else coming off the airplane that would seem abnormal prior to impact. He lost sight of the airplane as it descended below the tree line. He then heard the airplane impact terrain. He called 911, reported the accident and responded to the accident location in an effort to provide assistance.



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Western Pacific Region

Date: July 17, 2022
Person Contacted: Jacob Stirrett (Airport Resident)
NTSB Accident Number: WPR22FA254

Narrative:

The following is a synopsis of the information provided by Mr. Stirrett in an in-person interview.

Mr. Stirrett stated that he is a local resident but did not observe the accident flight. However, he would routinely observe the accident airplane perform various aerobatic maneuvers, such as, fly inverted over the airport, spins and barrel rolls. It was common to see the accident airplane takeoff, climb in a near vertical position, then turn the airplane toward the ground and overfly the airport.