



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

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<b>Location:</b>	BATON ROUGE, LA	<b>Accident Number:</b>	FTW96LA001
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	10/01/1995, 1845 CDT	<b>Registration:</b>	N63286
<b>Aircraft:</b>	AEROSTAR S60A	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	3 None

**Flight Conducted Under:** Part 91: General Aviation - Personal

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## Analysis

AFTER AN UNEVENTFUL FLIGHT, THE BALLOON PILOT COMMENCED AN APPROACH TO LAND IN A FIELD LOCATED BETWEEN POWER LINES AND AN APARTMENT COMPLEX. ACCORDING TO THE PILOT, SHE 'PASSED OVER THE POWER LINES', AND ABOUT 20 FEET PRIOR TO TOUCH DOWN, A 'SUDDEN, STRONG GUST OF WIND' PUSHED THE BALLOON 'DOWNWARD AND BACKWARD.' SUBSEQUENTLY, THE ENVELOPE CONTACTED THE POWER LINES THAT SHE HAD JUST PASSED OVER, AND THE BASKET CONTACTED THE GROUND. AFTER CONTACTING THE GROUND, THE BALLOON BEGAN TO SLIDE SIDEWAYS AND CONTACTED ANOTHER POWER LINE.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: THE PILOT'S FAILURE TO COMPENSATE FOR WIND CONDITIONS AND MAINTAIN ADEQUATE CLEARANCE FROM THE POWER LINES DURING THE APPROACH. A FACTOR WAS THE SUDDEN WIND GUST.

## Findings

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Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER  
Phase of Operation: APPROACH

### Findings

1. (C) COMPENSATION FOR WIND CONDITIONS - NOT PERFORMED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (C) CLEARANCE - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - GUSTS

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Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT  
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

### Findings

4. OBJECT - WIRE, TRANSMISSION

## Factual Information

On October 1, 1995, at 1845 central daylight time, an Aerostar S60A balloon, N63286, was substantially damaged during an approach to land in a field near Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The pilot and two passengers were not injured. The balloon, owned by the pilot, was being operated under Title 14 CFR Part 91. The personal flight was participating in a local ballooning event. A flight plan was not filed and visual meteorological conditions prevailed.

In an interview, the pilot stated that she commenced an approach to land in a field located between power lines and an apartment complex. During the approach, she "passed over the power lines", and about 20 feet prior to touch down, a "sudden, strong gust of wind" pushed the balloon "downward and backward." Subsequently, the envelope contacted the power lines that she had "passed over", and the basket contacted the ground. She further stated that, after contacting the ground, the balloon began to slide sideways and contacted another power line.

Examination of the balloon revealed arcing on the basket attaching cables and a torn envelope.

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Private	<b>Age:</b>	54, Female
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Unknown
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	Balloon	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	None Unknown	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>		<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	120 hours (Total, all aircraft), 116 hours (Total, this make and model), 104 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 12 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	AEROSTAR	Registration:	N63286
Model/Series:	S60A S60A	Aircraft Category:	Balloon
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	
Landing Gear Type:		Seats:	
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	04/02/1995, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	
Time Since Last Inspection:	26 Hours	Engines:	Unknown
Airframe Total Time:	112 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	
ELT:		Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	GALE M. SMITH	Rated Power:	
Operator:	GALE M. SMITH	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	, 0 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	0000	Direction from Accident Site:	0°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear / 0 ft agl	Visibility	10 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None / 0 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	6 knots / 20 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	95°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	31 °C / 24 °C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1735 CDT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

## Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	2 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 None	Latitude, Longitude:	

## Administrative Information

**Investigator In Charge (IIC):** ALEXANDER LEMISHKO **Report Date:** 12/19/1995

**Additional Participating Persons:** TONY MICHELLI; BATON ROUGE, LA

**Publish Date:**

**Investigation Docket:** NTSB accident and incident dockets serve as permanent archival information for the NTSB's investigations. Dockets released prior to June 1, 2009 are publicly available from the NTSB's Record Management Division at [pubinq@ntsb.gov](mailto:pubinq@ntsb.gov), or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at <http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/>.

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The Independent Safety Board Act, as codified at 49 U.S.C. Section 1154(b), precludes the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an incident or accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report. A factual report that may be admissible under 49 U.S.C. § 1154(b) is available [here](#).