



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	GRAND CANYON, AZ	Accident Number:	LAX96LA036
Date & Time:	11/02/1995, 1450 MST	Registration:	N404FD
Aircraft:	Agusta F.260D	Injuries:	1 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Ferry		

Analysis

The aircraft experienced a loss of engine power on the initial climb. The pilot reported the low pressure fuel light illuminated, and the fuel pressure gauge read near zero. The pilot manipulated the fuel selector through all tank positions with the electric fuel boost pump switch in the 'on' position, but fuel pressure was not restored. Subsequently, the airplane collided with trees during a forced landing on mountainous terrain about 2.3 miles southwest of the airport. The airplane had been modified with the installation of an auxiliary ferry fuel tank, which was only to be used during cruise flight. Fuel flow to the engine from the ferry tank was controlled by a selector valve handle, which had two positions, off and on. During a postcrash examination, the selector valve handle was found positioned a few degrees off the closed position. The ferry tank fuel line received suction whenever the mechanical or electrical fuel pumps are operating. When the valve was set at least 5 degrees off the closed position, air entered the fuel line to the engine. The valve was located near the right foot of the right seat occupant. This airplane was normally to be flown from the right seat.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the pilot inadvertently allowed the ferry tank fuel selector to be in (or to be moved to) a partially open position before or during takeoff, which allowed air to enter the fuel system lines and result in fuel starvation. The location of the valve in the cockpit allowed the ferry tank fuel selector handle to be susceptible to inadvertent movement by the pilot's foot.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(TOTAL) - NONMECHANICAL
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings

1. (C) FLUID,FUEL - STARVATION
2. (C) FUEL TANK SELECTOR POSITION - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (F) ACFT/EQUIP,INADEQUATE CONTROL LOCATION

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING AFTER TAKEOFF

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING AFTER TAKEOFF

Findings

- 4. TERRAIN CONDITION - MOUNTAINOUS/HILLY
- 5. OBJECT - TREE(S)

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline Transport; Flight Instructor; Commercial	Age:	45
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Glider	Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane Multi-engine; Airplane Single-engine; Instrument Airplane
Flight Time:	7500 hours (Total, all aircraft), 215 hours (Total, this make and model), 7000 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 150 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 90 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 7 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Agusta	Registration:	N404FD
Model/Series:	F.260D F.260D	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Operator:	VALHALLA AVIATION INC.	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None	Engine Model/Series:	O-540-E4A5
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Ferry		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	GCN, 6606 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Weather Observation Facility
Lowest Ceiling:	None / 0 ft agl	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	8 knots / 17 knots, 260°
Temperature:	11°C	Visibility	10 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	(GCN)	Destination:	LAS VEGAS, NV (LAS)

Airport Information

Airport:	GRAND CANYON NATL PARK (GCN)	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Runway Used:	21	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Length/Width:	8999 ft / 150 ft		

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Latitude, Longitude:			

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): ROBERT R CRISPIN

Adopted Date: 06/07/1996

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, or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at <http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/>.

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