



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	CLOVERDALE, OH	Accident Number:	IAD96LA103
Date & Time:	07/01/1996, 2000 EDT	Registration:	N7730V
Aircraft:	Aero Commander CALAIR A-9B	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 137: Agricultural		

Analysis

The pilot stated that while spraying a corn field with agriculture products he began climbing to clear some trees and noticed that the fuel pressure light was on. He switched on the boost pump and switched fuel tanks however, the engine quit. The aircraft was destroyed when it crashed between two trees and subsequently burned.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: Powerplant failure due to undetermined reasons. Contributing to the severity of the crash was the unsuitable terrain in which the aircraft landed and post-crash fire.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING - AERIAL APPLICATION

Findings

1. (C) POWERPLANT - FAILURE
2. (C) REASON FOR OCCURRENCE UNDETERMINED

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY DESCENT/LANDING

Findings

3. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - NONE SUITABLE

Factual Information

HISTORY OF THE FLIGHT

On July 1, 1996, at about 2000 eastern daylight time, a Aero Command Calair A-9B, N7730V, lost fuel pressure, then engine power while spraying agricultural products near Cloverdale, Ohio. The pilot, the sole occupant, sustained serious injuries. The airplane was destroyed during the forced landing and post-crash fire. Visual Meteorological conditions prevailed, and no flight plan was filed. The local flight was conducted under 14 CFR Part 137, and originated from Continental, Ohio, at approximately 0730.

The pilot stated that he departed Hiltner field, his home at about 0730, to spray a field of corn. He said that the field was in a tight river bottom and as he was about to pull up over some tall trees he noticed that the fuel pressure light was on. He said that he turned on the boost pump and switched tanks but the engine had already quit. He said that he made it over the trees and dumped the rest of his chemicals. The aircraft crashed between two trees. He said he unfastened his restraints and rolled out the right side of the aircraft and crawled away. He said he sustained head injuries, and burns to his left arm, face and back.

WRECKAGE EXAMINATION/DOCUMENTATION

On July 18, 1996, the wreckage was examined by an Airworthiness Inspector from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and a representative from Lycoming, the engine manufacturer. The following is a summary of their findings:

The cockpit, left wing and the inboard portion of the right wing were destroyed by impact and subsequent post-crash fire. The empennage remained intact but was impact damaged. The engine remained attached to the fuselage however, most of the accessory section and fuel lines were destroyed by fire, including the left and right magnetos, engine driven fuel pump, and the fuel injector servo. The engine crankshaft could be rotated, and all pistons and valves moved in sequence. There were no pre-existing mechanical failures found during the examination. According to the FAA inspector the aircraft had been fueled prior to the flight.

The propeller remained attached to the engine. One blade was bent forward at the midpoint and the opposite blade had an 'S type' curl at the outboard 1/3 of the blade.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	57, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	03/12/1996
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	15000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1000 hours (Total, this make and model), 15000 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 180 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 100 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 8 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Aero Commander	Registration:	N7730V
Model/Series:	CALAIR A-9B CALAIR A-9	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Restricted	Serial Number:	1481
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	1
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	09/12/1995, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3000 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	187 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	4300 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	IO-540-G1C5
Registered Owner:	JAMES HILTNER	Rated Power:	290 hp
Operator:	CHARLES W. HILTNER	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:	CHARLEY BILL'S AG SERVICE	Operator Designator Code:	

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	0 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None / 0 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	27° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	CONTINENTAL, OH	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	, OH	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	0730 EDT	Type of Airspace:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	BUTCH WILSON	Report Date:	02/02/1998
Additional Participating Persons:	LEE THIEL; COLUMBUS, OH GERALD R JAMES; DALLAS, TX		
Publish Date:			
Investigation Docket:	NTSB accident and incident docket 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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