



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

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|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| Location: | LAKE JACKSON, TX | Accident Number: | FTW97LA209 |
| Date & Time: | 06/01/1997, 0830 CDT | Registration: | N1200M |
| Aircraft: | Giertz VMAX PROBE | Injuries: | 1 Fatal |
| Flight Conducted Under: | Part 91: General Aviation - | | |

Analysis

The pilot designed, and built the aircraft. He was conducting the aircraft's initial test flight and was not wearing a helmet. Witnesses reported that immediately after takeoff it appeared that the 'aircraft was being over controlled until it was halfway down the runway.' Downwind the pilot reported by radio he had 'good control,' the engine's temperature was 230 degrees Fahrenheit, and he was returning to land. Witnesses observed the aircraft turn final approach to runway 35 in a stable attitude and in a descent. Approximately 5 to 20 feet above the runway, the 'aircraft lost directional stability in yaw mode then pitched abruptly toward the ground.' The aircraft impacted the runway, 'bounced up and went knife edge to the ground.' The aircraft impacted the runway about 625 feet from the initial impact point, and slid 625 feet to a stop inverted. Examination of the flight controls revealed no discontinuity that may have existed prior to the aircraft impacting the ground. The 63 year old pilot became qualified as a private pilot on January 9, 1982. According to his pilot log book he had a total flight time of 261.0 hours, and he had logged 8 hours within the last 90 days.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to maintain aircraft control during an approach to landing. A related factor was the pilot's lack of experience in make and model of aircraft.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - FINAL APPROACH

Findings

1. (C) AIRCRAFT CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) LACK OF TOTAL EXPERIENCE IN TYPE OF AIRCRAFT - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Pilot Information

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|------------------------------|------|
| Certificate: | Private | Age: | 63 |
| Airplane Rating(s): | Single-engine Land | Instrument Rating(s): | None |
| Other Aircraft Rating(s): | None | Instructor Rating(s): | None |
| Flight Time: | 261 hours (Total, all aircraft), 8 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft) | | |

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

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|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| Aircraft Make: | Giertz | Registration: | N1200M |
| Model/Series: | VMAX PROBE VMAX PROBE | Engines: | 1 Reciprocating |
| Operator: | LARS M. GIERTZ | Engine Manufacturer: | AMW |
| Operating Certificate(s) Held: | None | Engine Model/Series: | 808 |
| Flight Conducted Under: | Part 91: General Aviation - | | |

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

| | | | |
|---|-------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Conditions at Accident Site: | Visual Conditions | Condition of Light: | Day |
| Observation Facility, Elevation: | GLS, 7 ft msl | Weather Information Source: | Weather Observation Facility |
| Lowest Ceiling: | None / 0 ft agl | Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction: | 7 knots / , 10° |
| Temperature: | 24° C | Visibility | 10 Miles |
| Precipitation and Obscuration: | | | |
| Departure Point: | (LBX) | Destination: | |

Airport Information

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|-----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---------|
| Airport: | BRAZORIA COUNTY (LBX) | Runway Surface Type: | Asphalt |
| Runway Used: | 35 | Runway Surface Condition: | Dry |
| Runway Length/Width: | 7000 ft / 100 ft | | |

Wreckage and Impact Information

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|-----------------------------|---------|----------------------------|-------------|
| Crew Injuries: | 1 Fatal | Aircraft Damage: | Substantial |
| Passenger Injuries: | N/A | Aircraft Fire: | None |
| Ground Injuries: | N/A | Aircraft Explosion: | None |
| Latitude, Longitude: | | | |

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): DOUGLAS D WIGINGTON

Adopted Date: 06/26/1998

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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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.