



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

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|-------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| Location: | WILLIS, VA | Accident Number: | BF094LA001 |
| Date & Time: | 11/01/1993, 0849 EST | Registration: | N94440 |
| Aircraft: | UNIVAIR ERCOUPE 415E | Aircraft Damage: | Substantial |
| Defining Event: | | Injuries: | 1 None |

Flight Conducted Under: Part 91: General Aviation - Personal

Analysis

The pilot reported that while cruising at an altitude of 3,500 feet mean sea level, he attempted to increase power. He said that at that point, he lost throttle control and the engine went to idle. The pilot executed a forced landing and collided with the top of automobile in a residential area during the landing. Because of the mountainous, forested terrain he said he was unable to reach a suitable landing area. An examination of the airplane revealed the throttle cable assembly fitting failed and separated from its housing which prevented the pilot from manipulating the throttle.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the failure of the airplane's throttle cable fitting due to undetermined reasons, which prevented the pilot from applying power above engine idle. A factor in this accident was the lack of suitable terrain for the pilot to complete a forced landing without damaging the airplane.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(PARTIAL) - MECH FAILURE/MALF
Phase of Operation: CRUISE - NORMAL

Findings

1. (C) THROTTLE/POWER LEVER, LINKAGE - FAILURE, TOTAL
2. (C) REASON FOR OCCURRENCE UNDETERMINED
3. (C) THROTTLE/POWER CONTROL - NOT POSSIBLE - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - EMERGENCY

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

4. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - NONE SUITABLE
5. OBJECT - VEHICLE

Factual Information

On November 1, 1993, about 0849 hours eastern standard time, a Univair Ercoupe 415E, N94440 collided with objects at the termination of a forced landing. The forced landing was precipitated by a loss of engine power during cruise flight. The certificated private pilot was not injured and the airplane sustained substantial damage. The personal flight, being operated by the pilot/owner, originated in Blacksburg, Virginia and was destined for Apalachicola, Florida. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and a flight plan was not filed.

An FAA safety inspector examined the airplane on scene and interviewed the pilot. The pilot said that when he reduced power, the throttle cable assembly became loose. He said that he could not regain power and that the power remained at idle. An examination conducted by the FAA safety inspector revealed a throttle cable assembly fitting separated from its housing which would not allow the pilot to manipulate the throttle.

In his written report, the pilot added that because of mountainous terrain, he was unable to reach suitable terrain to complete the forced landing.

Pilot Information

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|----------------------------------|--|--|------------|
| Certificate: | Private | Age: | 67, Male |
| Airplane Rating(s): | Single-engine Land | Seat Occupied: | Left |
| Other Aircraft Rating(s): | None | Restraint Used: | Seatbelt |
| 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: | 08/13/1992 |
| Occupational Pilot: | | Last Flight Review or Equivalent: | |
| Flight Time: | 1332 hours (Total, all aircraft), 79 hours (Total, this make and model), 1332 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 30 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 15 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft) | | |

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

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|-------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Aircraft Make: | UNIVAIR | Registration: | N94440 |
| Model/Series: | ERCOUPE 415E ERCOUPE 41 | Aircraft Category: | Airplane |
| Year of Manufacture: | | Amateur Built: | No |
| Airworthiness Certificate: | Normal | Serial Number: | 5012 |
| Landing Gear Type: | Tricycle | Seats: | 2 |
| Date/Type of Last Inspection: | Annual | Certified Max Gross Wt.: | 1400 lbs |
| Time Since Last Inspection: | | Engines: | 1 Reciprocating |
| Airframe Total Time: | | Engine Manufacturer: | Continental |
| ELT: | | Engine Model/Series: | C-85-12 |
| Registered Owner: | LEONARD ROMANIK | Rated Power: | 85 hp |
| Operator: | LEONARD ROMANIK | Operating Certificate(s) Held: | None |

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

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|----------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| 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: | Scattered / 5000 ft agl | Visibility | 15 Miles |
| Lowest Ceiling: | Unknown / 0 ft agl | Visibility (RVR): | 0 ft |
| Wind Speed/Gusts: | 20 knots / 25 knots | Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Wind Direction: | 5° | Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Altimeter Setting: | 30 inches Hg | Temperature/Dew Point: | 2° C / -5° C |
| Precipitation and Obscuration: | | | |
| Departure Point: | BLACKSBURG, VA (BCB) | Type of Flight Plan Filed: | None |
| Destination: | APPALACHICOLA, FL (AAF) | Type of Clearance: | None |
| Departure Time: | 0830 EST | Type of Airspace: | Class G |

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): RICHARD V CHILDRESS **Report Date:** 12/02/1994

Additional Participating Persons: GENE ROBERTS; RICHMOND, VA

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, 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](#).