



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Factual Report

Location:	CONROE, TX	Accident Number:	FTW99LA128
Date & Time:	05/01/1999, 0740 CDT	Registration:	N2638K
Aircraft:	Luscombe 8E	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Serious

Flight Conducted Under: Part 91: General Aviation - Positioning

On May 1, 1999, approximately 0740 central daylight time, a Luscombe 8E experimental airplane, N2638K, was substantially damaged during a forced landing, following a loss of engine power near Conroe, Texas. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and a flight plan was not filed for the 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91 cross-country positioning flight. The aircraft was registered to and operated by the Don Luscombe Aviation History Foundation of Chandler, Arizona. The airline transport pilot, sole occupant of the aircraft, was seriously injured. The flight originated from Lafayette, Louisiana, at 0600, and was en route to Austin, Texas.

According to the FAA inspector, the pilot contacted Houston Center and reported the turboprop powered aircraft was experiencing engine problems. Houston Center gave the pilot radar vectors to the nearest airport; however, the aircraft was unable to make the airport.

The pilot reported that he descended from 5,500 feet msl to 3,500 feet msl in order to take advantage of the "higher tailwinds." After about 10 to 15 minutes, he observed a fuel flow "fluctuation from 15 GPH to 12 GPH, back to 15 GPH, then 11 GPH, and finally to about 2 GPH." Subsequently, the engine lost power. "Two restart cycles were attempted. One on the right tank, and a second on the left tank, though abbreviated due to proximity to the ground. The engine did not re-light, and power was not regained."

The 14,000-hour pilot reported to the NTSB investigator-in-charge that he was unable to locate the airport that ATC had identified as the nearest airport and prepared for a forced landing to a road. At about 100 feet agl, he initiated a turn to the west in order to see the traffic on the road. The aircraft passed under a 35 foot high power line. As the aircraft crossed over the road, "the left wingtip and left main gear contacted the asphalt road, very hard. The gear sheared and ricocheted off the wing strut. The propeller hit at a 15 degree nose down attitude, and the right gear sheared, leaving me [the aircraft] skidding on the belly." The aircraft came to rest upright in a ditch, which paralleled the road.

Examination of the aircraft by the FAA inspector revealed that both wings were structurally damaged, the firewall was buckled, and the empennage was bent. There was evidence at the

accident site of a fuel spill.

Examination of the fuel system by the pilot revealed a "caterpillar lodged in the forward facing vent" to the right wing fuel tank. The other four small auxiliary holes in the tank cap did not "seem capable of venting the tank while fuel is used at a rate of 15 GPH."

According to the pilot, a post accident examination and test run of the engine was satisfactory. At the time of the accident, there were 30 gallons of fuel on board.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline Transport; Flight Instructor; Commercial; Flight Engineer	Age:	45, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land; Single-engine Sea	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane Single-engine	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	02/11/1999
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	14000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 4000 hours (Total, this make and model), 10200 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 20 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 15 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 8 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Luscombe	Registration:	N2638K
Model/Series:	8E 8E	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental	Serial Number:	5365
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	3
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1700 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	60 Hours	Engines:	1 Turbo Prop
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Apex
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	T62-AZ-32
Registered Owner:	DON LUSCOMBE AVN HIST. FOUNDAT	Rated Power:	150 hp
Operator:	DON LUSCOMBE AVN HIST. FOUNDAT	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:	8 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	90°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	LAFAYETTE, LA (LFT)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	AUSTIN, TX (AUS)	Type of Clearance:	VFR on top
Departure Time:	0600 CDT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	DOUGLAS D WIGINGTON
Additional Participating Persons:	GALE HUEY; HOUSTON, TX
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/ .