



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	Immokalee, FL	Accident Number:	ATL03LA029
Date & Time:	01/03/2003, 1210 EST	Registration:	N45051
Aircraft:	Mielec PZL-M-18	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 137: Agricultural		

Analysis

According to the pilot, 20 minutes into the flight the engine flamed out while the airplane was in a left bank. As the pilot maneuvered for an emergency landing, the airplane's left wingtip struck trees, and the airplane collided with the ground. According to the pilot, in his preflight planning he did not compute the fuel consumption or reference the pilot operating handbook for the intended trip. The pilot stated he did not refuel the airplane after the initial load bearing trip. The pilot stated that this accident could have been prevented if he refueled the airplane before the initial load. According to the pilot this airplane is "notorious for poor fuel feeding when low on fuel".

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's inadequate in-flight planning/decision by his improper fuel management which resulted in fuel starvation. Also causal was the pilot's inadequate preflight planning which resulted in his failure to perform fuel consumption calculations and refueling of the aircraft.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER

Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings

1. (C) PREFLIGHT PLANNING/PREPARATION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (C) FLUID,FUEL - STARVATION
3. (C) FUEL MANAGEMENT - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING

Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY DESCENT/LANDING

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT

Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING

Findings

4. OBJECT - TREE(S)

Factual Information

On January 3, 2003, at 1210 eastern standard time a Mielec PZL-M-18, N45051, registered to and operated by Airwork Enterprises of Florida, Inc., collided with trees following a loss of engine power at the Zipper Farms Airstrip in the vicinity of Immokalee, Florida. The agricultural flight was operated under the provisions of Title 14 CFR Part 137, and visual flight rules. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and no flight plan was filed. The pilot was not injured, and the airplane sustained substantial damage. The flight originated from the Immokalee Airport in Immokalee, Florida, at 1145.

The agricultural flight was circular in nature and lasted approximately 20 minutes. The pilot attempted to return to Immokalee Airport when a loss of engine power occurred. According to the pilot, the engine flamed out while the airplane was in a left bank. As the pilot maneuvered for an emergency landing, the left wingtip struck trees, and the airplane collided with the ground. The airplane slid backward and, rotated 180 degrees. According to the pilot, in his preflight planning he did not compute the fuel consumption or reference the pilot operating handbook for the intended flight. The pilot stated he did not refuel the airplane after the initial load bearing trip.

Initial examination of the accident site revealed the airplane came to rest upright on its gear and slightly tilted to the left. No fuel was recovered from the right wing tank, 41 gallons of fuel was recovered from the left fuel tank. The wings and fuselage displayed impact damage. Examination of the airframe, flight controls, engine assemblies and accessories revealed no anomalies prior to impact. The pilot stated that this accident could have been prevented if he refueled the airplane before the initial load. According to the pilot this airplane is "notorious for poor fuel feeding when low on fuel".

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	51, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land; Single-engine Sea	Seat Occupied:	Single
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Without Waivers/Limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	12/05/2002
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	09/27/2001
Flight Time:	7700 hours (Total, all aircraft), 500 hours (Total, this make and model), 7500 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Mielec	Registration:	N45051
Model/Series:	PZL-M-18	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Restricted	Serial Number:	12011-04
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	1
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	03/23/2002, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	11700 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	15 Hours	Engines:	1 Turbo Prop
Airframe Total Time:	1885 Hours at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	T53-L
Registered Owner:	Airwork Enterprises of Florida Inc	Rated Power:	1100 hp
Operator:	Douglas Hodges	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	RSW, 30 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:	1253 EDT	Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 2600 ft agl	Visibility	10 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 4200 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	12 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	310°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.01 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	18° C / 11° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Immokalee, FL (IMM)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Hendry County, FL (PVT)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1115 EDT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

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:	26.538056, -81.758611

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Butch Wilson **Report Date:** 01/24/2005

Additional Participating Persons: Frank Donovan; Fort Lauderdale FSDO-17; Fort Lauderdale, FL

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/>.

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), established in 1967, is an independent federal agency mandated by Congress through the Independent Safety Board Act of 1974 to investigate transportation accidents, determine the probable causes of the accidents, issue safety recommendations, study transportation safety issues, and evaluate the safety effectiveness of government agencies involved in transportation. The NTSB makes public its actions and decisions through accident reports, safety studies, special investigation reports, safety recommendations, and statistical reviews.

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](#).