



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	Langley, WA	Accident Number:	SEA04LA152
Date & Time:	08/01/2004, 1030 PDT	Registration:	N70P
Aircraft:	Paulick Wittman W-10	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

Shortly after the aircraft took off, witnesses reported that the airplane did not attain an altitude sufficient to clear trees. The aircraft collided with trees and terrain near the departure end of the runway. A post-crash fire consumed the wreckage. Post-accident inspection of the heat distressed airframe and engine did not reveal evidence of a mechanical failure or malfunction.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's inadequate preflight preparation to assure adequate takeoff performance to clear obstacles, and his failure to maintain obstacle clearance.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings

1. (F) OBJECT - TREE(S)
2. (C) PREFLIGHT PLANNING/PREPARATION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) CLEARANCE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

On August 1, 2004, about 1030 Pacific daylight time, an experimental Paulick Wittman W-10, N70P, registered to and flown by the pilot as a 14 CFR Part 91 personal flight, collided with trees shortly after takeoff from Whidbey Air Park, Langley, Washington. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time and no flight plan was filed for the local flight. The aircraft was destroyed by impact damage and post-crash fire. The private pilot, the sole occupant, was fatally injured.

A witness reported that shortly after the aircraft took off from runway 16, the aircraft did not attain an altitude sufficient to clear trees. After the impact, a post-crash fire consumed the wreckage.

The pilot's flight logbook was not located for review. The Federal Aviation Administration Aero Medical Division reported that the pilot's last medical certificate, a Class III, was issued on February 3, 1999. At this time, the pilot reported a total flight time of 4,000 hours.

The wreckage was removed from the accident site and transported to the pilot's hangar at the airpark. Inspectors from the Seattle, Washington, Federal Aviation Administration Flight Standards District Office, reported that the engine displayed severe heat distress and impact damage. The crankcase was distorted, however, all connecting rods appeared to be connected to the crankshaft. The crankshaft would not turn. The oil pan was melted away. Both magnetos were heat distressed and their function could not be determined. The carburetor was destroyed. The fuel strainer and oil filter adapter assembly were intact, however, the lines to both were destroyed.

Control continuity to the elevator control system was established, however, damaged and heat distressed. The fuselage structure was heat distressed and the fabric covering was burned away.

Maintenance logbooks were not located for review.

The Island County Coroner's Office, Coupeville, Washington, conducted an autopsy. Dr. Andrea R. Capiola, Island County Deputy Coroner, reported that pilot's cause of death as: "Thermal burns" The coroner's report indicated an interview with the pilot's wife. During the interview, the Coroner learned that the pilot had experienced "a minor heart attack" about a year ago, but that since, the pilot was "in excellent health and was very lively." The pilot's wife reported that on the morning of the accident, he indicated to her that he was not planning on flying that day. The wife also indicated that the pilot was planning on selling the aircraft that was involved in the accident.

Toxicological samples were sent to the Federal Aviation Administration Civil Aeromedical Institute, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, for analysis. The results of the analysis were positive for Metoprolol detected in blood and present in urine.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	73, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Expired	Last FAA Medical Exam:	02/03/1999
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	4000 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Paulick	Registration:	N70P
Model/Series:	Wittman W-10	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental	Serial Number:	588
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:		Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1425 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:		Engine Model/Series:	O-300
Registered Owner:	Louis A Hagler	Rated Power:	145 hp
Operator:	Louis A Hagler	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	NUW, 47 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	21 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	0955 PDT	Direction from Accident Site:	318°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 20000 ft agl	Visibility	7 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:		Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	300°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29.95 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	13° C / 12° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Langley, WA (W10)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1030 PDT	Type of Airspace:	Class E

Airport Information

Airport:	Whidbey Air Park (W10)	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	260 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	16	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	2400 ft / 25 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Unknown

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	On-Ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	48.018056, -122.438333

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Debra J Eckrote	Report Date:	01/24/2005
Additional Participating Persons:	Bruce Kitelinger; FAA-FSDO; Renton, WA		
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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