



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	Shelby Gap, KY	Accident Number:	NYC06LA214
Date & Time:	09/02/2006, 1015 EDT	Registration:	N6401G
Aircraft:	Cessna 150K	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The non-instrument rated private pilot was attempting a cross-country flight, when the airplane impacted mountainous terrain. A witness reported that he heard the airplane circling, but could not see it due to fog. The witness heard the engine continually running, and then heard the sound of impact. Examination of the wreckage did not reveal any preimpact mechanical malfunctions. The reported weather near the accident site, about the time of the accident, included an overcast ceiling at 600 feet. There was no record of the pilot receiving a weather briefing from Flight Service. The pilot's most recent FAA medical certificate was issued more than 15 years prior to the accident, and he did not report any medications or abnormal medical history on his application. Toxicological testing indicated the pilot had taken pain medication, and his autopsy report noted evidence of previous coronary artery bypass; however, the report did not support or refute any possible impairment or incapacitation.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's improper decision to attempt a visual flight rules flight in instrument meteorological conditions, which resulted in an impact with mountainous terrain. A factor was the low ceiling.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings

1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - LOW CEILING
2. (C) PLANNING/DECISION - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. FLIGHT INTO ADVERSE WEATHER - ATTEMPTED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

Findings

4. TERRAIN CONDITION - MOUNTAINOUS/HILLY

Factual Information

On September 2, 2006, about 1015 eastern daylight time, a Cessna 150K, N6401G, was destroyed during a collision with mountainous terrain and subsequent postcrash fire, while maneuvering near Shelby Gap, Kentucky. The certificated, non-instrument rated, private pilot was fatally injured. Instrument meteorological conditions prevailed for the flight that departed a private airstrip in Brasstown, North Carolina; destined for Big Sandy Regional Airport (K22), Prestonsburg, Kentucky. No flight plan was filed for the personal flight conducted under 14 CFR Part 91.

A witness was hunting near the accident site, and heard a small airplane overhead. The witness stated that he could not see the airplane due to fog, but heard the airplane circle back. He then heard the sound of trees breaking, followed by the sound of impact. The witness further stated that he heard the engine running until the sound of impact.

Examination of the wreckage by a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) inspector did not reveal any preimpact mechanical malfunctions. The FAA inspector stated that the aircraft and pilot logbooks were not recovered. There was also no record of the pilot receiving a weather briefing from Flight Service.

An autopsy was performed by the Pike County Coroner's Office, Pikeville, Kentucky. Toxicological testing was conducted on the pilot at the FAA Toxicology Accident Research Laboratory, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Review of the toxicology report revealed:

"...1.012 (ug/ml, ug/g) PROPOXYPHENE detected in Liver
1.782 (ug/ml, ug/g) PROPOXYPHENE detected in Lung
0.739 (ug/mL, ug/g) NORPROPOXYPHENE detected in Liver
14.032 (ug/mL, ug/g) NORPROPOXYPHENE detected in Lung..."

The pilot's wife reported that he had been taking pain medication due to pain associated with a previous heart surgery and stent. Evidence of previous coronary artery bypass surgery was noted in the autopsy report. The pilot's wife added that he also experienced pain from both arms due to a car accident, and knees due to construction work.

Review of FAA medical records revealed that the pilot's most recent third class medical certificate was issued on August 27, 1991. On the application for that medical certificate, he reported "No" for use of any medication and all medical history items. He also reported 1,200 hours of total flight experience.

The reported weather at an airport approximately 16 miles south of the accident site, at 1019, was: wind calm; visibility 10 miles; overcast ceiling at 600 feet; temperature 63 degrees F; dew point 57 degrees F; altimeter 30.06 inches Hg.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	65, 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:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Without Waivers/Limitations	Last Medical Exam:	08/01/1991
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	1200 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Manufacturer:	Cessna	Registration:	N6401G
Model/Series:	150K	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	15071901
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1600 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-200
Registered Owner:	Raymond Schick	Rated Power:	100 hp
Operator:	Rush Bradford	Air Carrier Operating Certificate:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Observation Facility, Elevation:	LNP, 2684 ft msl	Observation Time:	1019 EDT
Distance from Accident Site:	16 Nautical Miles	Condition of Light:	Day
Direction from Accident Site:	180°	Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument Conditions
Lowest Cloud Condition:		Temperature/Dew Point:	17° C / 14° C
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 600 ft agl	Visibility	10 Miles
Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	Calm	Visibility (RVR):	
Altimeter Setting:	30.06 inches Hg	Visibility (RVV):	
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Brasstown, NC (NONE)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Prestonburg, KY (K22)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	0800 EDT	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	Big Sandy Regional Airport (K22)	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	1221 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	NA	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	None

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		

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Robert J Gretz	Adopted Date:	08/30/2007
Additional Participating Persons:	John Stevens; FAA/FSDO; Louisville, KY Peter Basile; Cessna Aircraft Company; Wichita, KS		
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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