



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	Garden City, TX	Accident Number:	DFW06CA149
Date & Time:	06/01/2006, 1100 CDT	Registration:	N7318C
Aircraft:	Air Tractor AT-401	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None

Flight Conducted Under: Part 91: General Aviation - Flight Test

Analysis

The non-instrument rated commercial pilot departed on a maintenance test flight in a single-engine agricultural airplane. During the test flight the airplane's radial engine lost power and the pilot elected to execute a forced landing to a cotton field. The airplane sustained structural damage during the forced landing. There was no fire and the pilot was able to egress the airplane unassisted. The winds at the time of the accident were reported from 040 degrees at 11 knots, gusting to 18 knots. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) inspector, who traveled to the accident site, confirmed the airplane sustained structural damage during the forced landing. Additionally, the inspector reported that the aircraft ran out of fuel. Despite repeated attempts by the Investigator-In-Charge (IIC), the pilot failed to return a completed Pilot Operator Aircraft Accident Report Form (NTSB Form 6120.1).

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's improper in-flight planning resulting in the loss of engine power due to fuel exhaustion. A contributing factor was the lack of suitable terrain for the forced landing.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(TOTAL) - NONMECHANICAL
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings

1. (C) FLUID,FUEL - EXHAUSTION
2. (C) IN-FLIGHT PLANNING/DECISION - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND

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

Occurrence #3: ON GROUND/WATER ENCOUNTER WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING

Findings

3. TERRAIN CONDITION - CROP
4. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - NONE SUITABLE

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	39, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Without Waivers/Limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	01/01/2006
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	1500 hours (Total, all aircraft), 50 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Air Tractor	Registration:	N7318C
Model/Series:	AT-401	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Restricted	Serial Number:	401-0680
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	
Date/Type of Last Inspection:		Certified Max Gross Wt.:	6000 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Pratt & Whitney
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	R-1820
Registered Owner:	Summers Spraying Service, Inc.	Rated Power:	600 hp
Operator:	Roger Quinn	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	
Operator Does Business As:	Summers Spraying Service, Inc.	Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	BPG	Distance from Accident Site:	25 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1044 CDT	Direction from Accident Site:	360°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 3100 ft agl	Visibility	10 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	11 knots / 18 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	40°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.22 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	26°C / 16°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Garden City, TX	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Garden City, TX	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	CDT	Type of Airspace:	

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:	31.866667, -101.483333

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Craig R Hatch	Report Date:	11/29/2006
Additional Participating Persons:	Bruce Jeffco; Lubbock, Texas		
Publish Date:			
Note:	This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.		
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](#).