



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	Canadian, TX	Accident Number:	DFW07LA102
Date & Time:	05/02/2007, 1300 CDT	Registration:	N10028
Aircraft:	Walker Zenith Zodiac 601 XL	Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Business		

Analysis

The single engine experimental light sport airplane was observed departing from the airport in deteriorating weather conditions that consisted of low ceilings, reduced visibility, heavy rain, and lightning southwest of the airport. The pilot, who held an FAA Sport Pilot certificate, did not file a flight plan and there was no record that he obtained a weather briefing from an automated flight service station prior to departure. The purpose of the flight could not be determined; however, witnesses heard and/or observed the airplane depart and then fly in the vicinity of the airport for approximately 15 minutes before it was reported to police that the airplane had crashed approximately 2.3 miles northwest of the airport about 16 minutes later. There were no known voice communications from the pilot prior to the accident. A review of the wreckage revealed that the airplane came apart in flight before it impacted terrain. The debris was scattered along a heading of 030 degrees for approximately 1.3 miles. Examination of the fractured wing spars and elevator rear attachment points revealed signatures consistent with overload stresses. In addition, examination of the two seatbelt assemblies revealed that they remained securely attached to their respective airframe attachment points, but were not buckled. The seatbelt material was clean, not stretched, and the metal buckles (male and female) did not exhibit any damage. The canopy's locking mechanism was found in the unlocked position. A toxicological exam revealed positive results for the following drugs; bupropion, an antidepressant medication, was detected in the kidney, bupropion metabolite was detected in the kidney and present in the liver; chloroquine, a medication used for the treatment or prevention of malaria, was detected in the liver; and, diphenhydramine, an antihistamine with sedative effects, was detected in the kidney and liver. No blood, urine, or vitreous was available for analysis.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's improper pre-flight planning and decision to depart into deteriorating weather conditions, which resulted in a loss of control and subsequent in-flight break up.

Findings

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

Findings

1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - LOW CEILING
 2. (C) PREFLIGHT PLANNING/PREPARATION - POOR - PILOT IN COMMAND
 3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - RAIN
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Occurrence #2: AIRFRAME/COMPONENT/SYSTEM FAILURE/MALFUNCTION
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

Findings

4. (C) WING - SEPARATION
 5. (C) DESIGN STRESS LIMITS OF AIRCRAFT - EXCEEDED - PILOT IN COMMAND
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Occurrence #3: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Occurrence #4: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Sport Pilot	Age:	63
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	None
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:	176 hours (Total, all aircraft), 43 hours (Total, this make and model), 30 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Manufacturer:	Walker	Registration:	N10028
Model/Series:	Zenith Zodiac 601 XL	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Operator:	McMurphy Consulting	Engine Manufacturer:	Teledyne Continental
Air Carrier Operating Certificate:	None	Engine Model/Series:	O-200-A`
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Business		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Observation Facility, Elevation:	HHF, 2394 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Weather Observation Facility
Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument Conditions	Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 800 ft agl
Condition of Light:	Day	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	5 knots, 360°
Temperature:	15° C / 15° C	Visibility	2 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:	Heavy - Thunderstorms - Mist		
Departure Point:	Canadian, TN (HHF)	Destination:	Canadian, TN (HHF)

Airport Information

Airport:	Hemphill County Airport (HHF)	Runway Surface Type:	
Runway Used:	NA	Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Length/Width:			

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Leah D Yeager	Adopted Date:	05/28/2008
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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