



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	Battle Creek, MI	Accident Number:	CHI07CA189
Date & Time:	07/02/2007, 2045 EDT	Registration:	N4021M
Aircraft:	Cameron Balloons Z-77	Injuries:	1 Minor, 1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation -		

Analysis

The balloon caught fire after landing during the Battle Creek Field of Flight Hot Air Balloon Festival. The pilot stated that after approximately one hour in the air, the balloon landed safely in a yard. When the pilot looked up inside the top of the balloon envelope, the "parachute top did not reseal." He attempted to reseal the top by using a "blast of heat" from the burners but it did not work. The pilot "knew the balloon would quickly sink down on top of the basket" so he turned the burners to their horizontal position and prepared to push the envelope fabric away. When the balloon envelope began to descend towards the ground the pilot reported that "we suddenly had a fire in the basket." Both the pilot and passenger were able to exit the basket. The pilot "determined the fire was coming from the burners" so he returned to the basket and turned off the fuel tanks. The fire was subsequently extinguished by the passenger and bystanders. An examination of the balloon after the accident revealed the fuel valve for the whisper burners was in the "on" position.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The whisper burner's fuel valve opening for undetermined reasons, which resulted in a fire after landing. A factor in the accident was the balloon envelope's parachute top not resealing.

Findings

Occurrence #1: FIRE
Phase of Operation: LANDING

Findings

1. (C) BALLOON EQUIPMENT, BURNER SYSTEM - OTHER
2. (C) REASON FOR OCCURRENCE UNDETERMINED
3. (F) BALLOON EQUIPMENT, ENVELOPE - OTHER

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	52
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Instrument Rating(s):	None
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Balloon	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:	895 hours (Total, all aircraft), 31 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Manufacturer:	Cameron Balloons	Registration:	N4021M
Model/Series:	Z-77	Engines:	0
Operator:	On file	Engine Manufacturer:	
Air Carrier Operating Certificate:	None	Engine Model/Series:	
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation -		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Observation Facility, Elevation:	BTL	Weather Information Source:	Weather Observation Facility
Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Lowest Ceiling:	None
Condition of Light:	Day	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	3 knots, 190°
Temperature:	23°C / 5°C	Visibility	10 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	unknown, MI	Destination:	Battle Creek, MI

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Fire:	On-Ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Mitchell Gallo	Adopted Date:	08/30/2007
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/ .		

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