



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	Decatur, IL	Accident Number:	CEN11LA090
Date & Time:	12/02/2010, 1406 CST	Registration:	N415US
Aircraft:	SOUTHERLAND FREEBIRD LITESPORT U	Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot was performing a high-speed taxi in his amateur-built airplane when it inadvertently became airborne. The inadvertent flight was the airplane's first flight. The pilot requested a landing clearance and was given one. The pilot reported that he had trouble getting the airplane's nose down. He reported a MAYDAY and indicated that he had no control of the airplane. He was given a clearance to land on any runway. During his last transmission, the pilot reported that he could not keep the nose down. The airplane was observed descending tail-end down and then nose down. The airplane impacted the ground, coming to rest about two miles east of the airport. An on-scene examination of the airplane revealed that the wing separated from the fuselage. The separation was consistent with overload. No other anomalies were detected. The on-scene investigation did not document center of gravity or trim settings.

Flight Events

Maneuvering - Loss of control in flight
Uncontrolled descent - Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's reported inability to control his amateur-built airplane for undetermined reasons after the airplane inadvertently became airborne while conducting a high-speed taxi.

Findings

Aircraft-Aircraft oper/perf/capability-Performance/control parameters-Pitch control-
Attain/maintain not possible - C
Not determined-Not determined-(general)-(general)-Unknown/Not determined - C

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Sport Pilot	Age:	55
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	None
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:	61 hours (Total, all aircraft), 15 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Manufacturer:	SOUTHERLAND	Registration:	N415US
Model/Series:	FREEBIRD LITESPORT U	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Operator:	On file	Engine Manufacturer:	Chevy Geo Metro
Air Carrier Operating Certificate:	None	Engine Model/Series:	
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Observation Facility, Elevation:	DEC, 682 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Weather Observation Facility
Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 4300 ft agl
Condition of Light:	Day	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	6 knots, 230°
Temperature:	1°C / -3°C	Visibility	10 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Decatur, IL (DEC)	Destination:	Decatur, IL (DEC)

Airport Information

Airport:	Decatur Airport (DEC)	Runway Surface Type:	
Runway Used:	N/A	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):	Edward F Malinowski	Adopted Date:	04/20/2012
Investigation Docket:	http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=77929		

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