



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	Denmark, WI	Accident Number:	CEN12LA133
Date & Time:	01/11/2012, 2245 CST	Registration:	N60676
Aircraft:	CESSNA 150J	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Loss of control in flight	Injuries:	1 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

During the flight before the accident flight, the airplane's cockpit lighting failed and the pilot landed at an alternate airport. Later, a witness saw the pilot walking back to the airport with a 12-pack of beer, and said that the pilot explained that he was going to drink beer and sleep until morning in the airplane. However, the pilot fueled the airplane at a self-service fuel pump and departed for his home airport later that night. Witnesses near the accident site reported seeing an airplane maneuvering at a low altitude with the exterior lights turning on and off. During postaccident interviews, the pilot reported that he did not have interior lighting and was attempting to restore the airplane's interior lighting by turning the exterior lighting on and off. He also stated that he was having difficulty maintaining control of the airplane. The pilot subsequently lost control of the airplane, which entered an unusual attitude and was not recovered before colliding with trees. Subsequent testing revealed that the pilot had a blood alcohol level of 0.138 g/100 ml. The legal limit for operating an airplane is 0.04 g/100 ml. Postaccident examination of the airplane revealed that the bulb for the interior lighting had burned out.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's loss of control due to his alcohol impairment. Contributing to the accident was the pilot's decision to fly at night with a known interior lighting malfunction.

Findings

Aircraft	Directional control - Not attained/maintained (Cause) Flight compartment lighting - Not serviced/maintained (Factor)
Personnel issues	Alcohol - Pilot (Cause) Action - Pilot (Factor)

Factual Information

On January 11, 2012, about 2245 central standard time (CST), a Cessna 150J airplane, N60676, collided with trees near Denmark, Wisconsin. The airline transport pilot, the sole occupant, was seriously injured. The airplane sustained substantial damage to the wings and fuselage. The airplane was registered to and operated by a private individual under the provisions of 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91 as a personal flight. Night visual meteorological conditions prevailed for the flight, which operated without a flight plan. The flight originated from the Manitowoc Regional Airport (KMTW), Manitowoc, Wisconsin, about 2045, and destined for the West Bend Municipal Airport (KETB), West Bend, Wisconsin.

A witness at KMTW reported to police that the pilot had entered a local Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) meeting asking if food was available. The witness added that the accident pilot told him that while on a joy ride, all of the interior lighting went out. The pilot was having a hard time navigating, saw the beacon at KMTW, and decided to land and remain in the Manitowoc area until it got light again. Another witness at the airport saw the pilot walking to the airport ramp with a 12-pack of beer. In a conversation with the pilot, the witness recalled that the pilot stated he was going to drink a few beers and sleep in his Cessna 150 until daylight. The witness told the pilot to ask the local EAA members for assistance. Receipts from the airfield show that the pilot fueled his airplane three times between 2009 and 2030, and the pilot reported that he departed shortly after refueling.

A pilot rated witness reported that he observed the airplane about 2230, two miles south of crash site. He added that the airplane maneuvered approximately 500 feet above ground level. The airplane's landing light was observed on and off during the turns. The witness reported that the airplane's engine sounded normal and changes to the engine's rpm were heard.

The accident site consisted of a heavily wooded area in slightly rolling terrain. The airplane was suspended inverted in trees at an approximate height of 50 feet. In the area under the suspended airplane, an empty 12-pack beer container was found with five unopened beer cans found in the nearby area; one beer can was in a beverage holder. Two beer cans were found opened and empty.

In statements obtained by the Kewaunee County Sheriff's department, at 0243 on January 12, the pilot called to report the airplane crash. During questioning, the pilot admitted to drinking three alcohol beverages between 1100 and 1500 at his residence the previous day. The pilot recall that he then left his residence, drove to KETB, and flew his airplane to KMTW. At KMTW, the pilot reported that he went to look for a restaurant, but did not leave the airport. He fueled his airplane and departed for KETB. At that time, the pilot reported not knowing how the accident had occurred.

At 0452 the pilot consented to blood alcohol testing. Specimens sent to the Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene's Toxicology Section were positive for alcohol with a result a 0.138 g/100 mL. On the consent form the pilot indicated that he had not drank any alcohol since the accident.

A subsequent interview of the pilot by the Kewaunee County Sheriff's department revealed that the pilot admitted leaving the airport and purchasing a 12-pack container of beer during his stop at KMTW before fueling his airplane. The pilot stated that his planned route was to fly north over the Fox Valley before proceeding to KETB. The pilot recalled that the engine was

performing normally. He also stated that he often does left and right turns in a zigzag fashion in order to see around the wings. The pilot estimated his altitude was between 3,500 and 4,000 feet msl. After the accident, the pilot remained in the inverted airplane and drank several beers. The pilot then decided to exit the airplane.

The pilot did not provide a completed NTSB Form 6120.1. A signed pilot statement, dated January 22, 2012, provided to the pilot's insurance company, recalled that while maneuvering with a dark horizon, the navigation lights/instrument lights blew out. While looking for a flashlight, the airplane entered a nose low unusual attitude. The pilot attempted to use his cell phone to illuminate the attitude indicator and recover from the unusual attitude. The pilot reported that he turned the landing and taxi lights on in an attempt to restore cockpit lighting. The pilot was unable to visual orientate himself and the airplane collided with trees.

An examination of the airplane revealed that the light bulb used to illuminate the cockpit instrumentation was burned out.

History of Flight

Prior to flight	Sys/Comp malf/fail (non-power)
Maneuvering	Sys/Comp malf/fail (non-power) Loss of control in flight (Defining event) Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline Transport; Commercial	Age:	38, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane Multi-engine; Airplane Single-engine	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 1 With Waivers/Limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	08/15/2011
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	08/03/2011
Flight Time:	4767 hours (Total, all aircraft), 150 hours (Total, this make and model), 30 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	CESSNA	Registration:	N60676
Model/Series:	150J	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Utility	Serial Number:	15070493
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	08/11/2011, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1600 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	30 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	8252 Hours at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	CONT MOTOR
ELT:	C91A installed	Engine Model/Series:	O-200 SERIES
Registered Owner:	GREEN CHARLES S III	Rated Power:	100 hp
Operator:	GREEN CHARLES S III	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Night
Observation Facility, Elevation:	GRB	Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:	2253 CST	Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 10000 ft agl	Visibility	6 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	7 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	10°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29.54 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	1°C / -2°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	Moderate - Mist		
Departure Point:	Manitowoc, WI (KMTW)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	Unknown
Destination:	West Bend, WI (KETB)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	2045 CST	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	Runway Surface Type:
Airport Elevation:	Runway Surface Condition:
Runway Used:	IFR Approach:
Runway Length/Width:	VFR Approach/Landing:

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Serious	Latitude, Longitude:	44.395833, -97.660278 (est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Jason T Aguilera	Report Date:	11/07/2012
Additional Participating Persons:	Michael Mecha; Federal Aviation Administration; Milwaukee, WI		
Publish Date:	11/07/2012		
Investigation Docket:	http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=82677		

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