



# National Transportation Safety Board

## Aviation Accident Data Summary

|                                |                                      |                         |            |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| <b>Location:</b>               | Murieta, CA                          | <b>Accident Number:</b> | WPR14CA184 |
| <b>Date &amp; Time:</b>        | 05/02/2014, 1830 PDT                 | <b>Registration:</b>    | N8603X     |
| <b>Aircraft:</b>               | CESSNA 180D                          | <b>Injuries:</b>        | 3 None     |
| <b>Flight Conducted Under:</b> | Part 91: General Aviation - Personal |                         |            |

### Analysis

The high-wing, tailwheel-equipped airplane had just been signed off on its most recent annual inspection, and the pilot/owner had also topped off the fuel tanks before he flew it about 10 miles to a friend's private grass/dirt airstrip. The pilot described it as a "one way" strip, explaining that the landing direction was "uphill" and the takeoff direction was "downhill." The pilot had operated into and out of the airstrip about 20 times previously. All those flights, as well as that day's inbound flight and landing, were uneventful. After boarding and start up, the pilot back-taxed to the top of the rise that constituted the beginning of the runway. That section of the runway was more steeply sloped (downhill) than the rest of the runway. As the pilot reached the beginning of the runway, he made a 180-degree left turn, and began the takeoff roll; he did not straighten the tailwheel prior to application of takeoff power. As soon as the pilot added takeoff power, the nose "went about 15 degrees left." The pilot continued the takeoff attempt, and tried to recover the desired ground track by application of full right rudder. The pilot saw that the airplane was headed for a golf cart, with a person seated in it, that was situated about 80 feet off the left side of the runway. The pilot opted to turn more sharply left in order to avoid the cart and person, and this action took the airplane on a track that was more divergent from the runway axis. The left main landing gear struck a hummock and fracture-separated from the airplane, which resulted in lower fuselage and left wing ground contact. The airplane slid to a stop, with substantial damage to the fuselage and left wing. The pilot stated that the wind was "way under" 10 mph, coming onto the right side of the airplane during the takeoff attempt. He reported that he did not abandon the takeoff attempt at the initial veer off, because he was concerned about the airplane nosing over onto its back during an attempt to stop. One passenger reported that the initial directional excursion was "almost immediately" about 45 degrees off the runway axis. Post-accident examination of the airplane did not reveal any pre-impact conditions which would have precluded normal operation. Review of weight and balance information indicated that the center of gravity was very slightly forward of the forward limit, and the airplane might have been very slightly above its maximum certificated takeoff weight. Neither condition would have contributed to the loss of directional control.

### Flight Events

Takeoff - Loss of control on ground  
Takeoff - 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 loss of directional control during takeoff. Contributing to the accident was the pilot's failure to abort the takeoff at the initial veer off.

### Findings

Aircraft-Aircraft oper/perf/capability-Performance/control parameters-Directional control-Not attained/maintained - C

Aircraft-Aircraft systems-Landing gear system-Landing gear steering system-Incorrect use/operation

Personnel issues-Task performance-Use of equip/info-Aircraft control-Pilot - C

Personnel issues-Action/decision-Info processing/decision-Decision making/judgment-Pilot - F

Environmental issues-Physical environment-Terrain-Sloped/uneven-Contributed to outcome

## Pilot Information

|                                  |  |                              |      |
|----------------------------------|--|------------------------------|------|
| <b>Certificate:</b>              | Private  | <b>Age:</b>                  | 58   |
| <b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>       | Single-engine Land   | <b>Instrument Rating(s):</b> | None |
| <b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b> | Glider; Helicopter   | <b>Instructor Rating(s):</b> | None |
| <b>Flight Time:</b>              | 1319 hours (Total, all aircraft), 348 hours (Total, this make and model), 6 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft) |                              |      |

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

|   |                                      |                             |                 |
|---|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Aircraft Manufacturer:</b>             | CESSNA                               | <b>Registration:</b>        | N8603X          |
| <b>Model/Series:</b>                      | 180D D                               | <b>Engines:</b>             | 1 Reciprocating |
| <b>Operator:</b>                          | On file                              | <b>Engine Manufacturer:</b> | CONT MOTOR      |
| <b>Air Carrier Operating Certificate:</b> | None                                 | <b>Engine Model/Series:</b> | O-470 SERIES    |
| <b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>            | Part 91: General Aviation - Personal |                             |                 |

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

|   |                                  |                                     |                              |
|---|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b> |                                  | <b>Weather Information Source:</b>  | Pilot                        |
| <b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>     | Visual Conditions                | <b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>              | None                         |
| <b>Condition of Light:</b>              | Day                              | <b>Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:</b> | 5 knots/ 999 knots, Variable |
| <b>Temperature:</b>                     |                                  | <b>Visibility</b>                   | 20 Miles                     |
| <b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>   | No Obscuration; No Precipitation |                                     |                              |
| <b>Departure Point:</b>                 | Murieta, CA (None)               | <b>Destination:</b>                 |                              |

## Airport Information

|                             |                 |                                  |                  |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Airport:</b>             | Private (None)  | <b>Runway Surface Type:</b>      | Dirt; Grass/turf |
| <b>Runway Used:</b>         | 99              | <b>Runway Surface Condition:</b> | Dry              |
| <b>Runway Length/Width:</b> | 1900 ft / 60 ft |                                  |                  |

## Wreckage and Impact Information

|                            |        |                            |             |
|----------------------------|--------|----------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Crew Injuries:</b>      | 1 None | <b>Aircraft Damage:</b>    | Substantial |
| <b>Passenger Injuries:</b> | 2 None | <b>Aircraft Fire:</b>      | None        |
| <b>Ground Injuries:</b>    | N/A    | <b>Aircraft Explosion:</b> | None        |

## Administrative Information

|                               |   |               |            |
|-------------------------------|---|---------------|------------|
| Investigator In Charge (IIC): | Michael C Huhn  | Adopted Date: | 09/24/2014 |
| Note:                         | This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.                             |               |            |
| Investigation Docket:         | <a href="http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=89180">http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=89180</a> |               |            |

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