



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	Havasu City, AZ	Accident Number:	WPR15CA033
Date & Time:	11/05/2014, 1110 MST	Registration:	N149DS
Aircraft:	BEECH A35	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Fuel starvation	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot stated that he was level cruise at 10,500 feet mean sea level, when he moved the fuel selector from the right tank to the left tank. The airplane was equipped with the Beech fuel selector valve disengagement warning light kit. The fuel selector is a combined fuel pump and valve assembly. The handle can be lifted up and down to pump fuel, but in this condition it is not engaged with the selector valve portion of the assembly. When the fuel selector handle and the fuel valve do not agree, the red 'fuel' light illuminates.

When the pilot selected the left tank the red 'fuel' light illuminated. He cross checked the fuel flow and fuel pressure, both of which were in the normal range. A few minutes later he entered an en-route descent, when the engine began to lose power. He pumped the fuel pump, the red 'fuel' light remained ON, and the engine did not regain power. The pilot executed a forced landing onto a road and damaged the left wing during the landing roll. A post accident examination of the airplane was performed by a Federal Aviation Administration inspector and a technical representative from the airplane manufacturer. The fuel selector valve was found to operate as designed. The red 'fuel' light illuminated when the fuel selector handle was not engaged with the valve and aligned with the fuel tank that provides fuel to the engine. Additionally, the engine was test run and found to operate normally.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: Loss of engine power due to fuel starvation as a result of the pilot's failure to properly operate the fuel selector valve.

Findings

Aircraft	Fuel selector/shutoff valve - Incorrect use/operation (Cause) Fuel - Fluid level (Cause)
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Factual Information

History of Flight

Enroute-descent	Loss of engine power (total) Fuel starvation (Defining event)
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Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	70
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land; Single-engine Sea	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Glider	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 With Waivers/Limitations	Last Medical Exam:	01/27/2014
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	07/02/2014
Flight Time:	7044 hours (Total, all aircraft), 24 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Manufacturer:	BEECH	Registration:	N149DS
Model/Series:	A35 NO SERIES	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	D-2152
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	02/25/2014, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2652 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	10 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	6282 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	E-185-11
Registered Owner:	BUFFALOE THOMAS N	Rated Power:	185 hp
Operator:	BUFFALOE THOMAS N	Air Carrier Operating Certificate:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Observation Facility, Elevation:	KHII, 783 ft msl	Observation Time:	1135 MST
Distance from Accident Site:	25 Nautical Miles	Condition of Light:	Day
Direction from Accident Site:	270°	Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Temperature/Dew Point:	23° C / -5° C
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility	10 Miles
Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	5 knots, 300°	Visibility (RVR):	
Altimeter Setting:	30.19 inches Hg	Visibility (RVV):	
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Cortez, CO (KCEZ)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Parker, AZ (P20)	Type of Clearance:	VFR Flight Following
Departure Time:	1025 MDT	Type of Airspace:	Military Operation Area

Airport Information

Airport:	Lake Havasu City (KHII)	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	783 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Unknown
Runway Used:	N/A	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	Forced Landing

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Van McKenny	Adopted Date:	01/22/2015
Additional Participating Persons:	Dane Guynn; FAA; Scottsdale, AZ Henry Soderlund; Textron Aviation; Wichita, KS		
Publish Date:	01/22/2015		
Note:	This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.		
Investigation Docket:	http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=90357		

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