



# National Transportation Safety Board

## Aviation Accident Data Summary

<b>Location:</b>	Chesnee, SC	<b>Accident Number:</b>	ERA15LA219
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	03/09/2015, 1807 EDT	<b>Registration:</b>	Unreg
<b>Aircraft:</b>	RAINBOW AIRCRAFT (PTY) LTD AEROTRIKE	<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal, 1 Minor
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

### Analysis

The pilot and passenger were conducting a local demonstration flight in the weight-shift-control trike. The pilot was seated in the rear seat and was controlling the wing by hand from cables attached to the control bar, and the passenger was seated in the front seat and had his hands on the control bar. The passenger reported that, during takeoff and when the trike was about 100 ft above ground level, it veered right, which the pilot corrected. The trike then suddenly banked right toward a tree line about 50 yards away. At that time, the passenger released the control bar. The pilot attempted to correct, but while in a climb attitude with the engine running, the bottom of the trike contacted a treetop. The trike descended but remained suspended in the tree. The pilot told the passenger that he did not believe the tree would support them, and he subsequently attempted to jump to a nearby limb but fell, which resulted in his sustaining fatal injuries. The passenger remained in the trike and was rescued 2 hours later. According to the passenger, he and the pilot had only sustained cuts and scratches as a result of the collision with the tree.

Postaccident examination of the trike revealed no evidence of a flight control or engine malfunction; the engine was started with no discrepancies noted. Further, the passenger did not detect any engine issues during the flight. He reported that he believed that the right veer was consistent with a wing stall. Although the trike was not equipped with a control bar for the rear seat, the passenger indicated that the pilot moved the control bar in the correct direction with the cables; therefore, it is unlikely that the lack of a control bar at the rear-seat position contributed to the failure of the pilot to maintain lateral or bank control.

### Flight Events

Initial climb - Loss of control in flight  
Initial climb - 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 failure to maintain lateral or bank control during takeoff, which resulted in collision with, and subsequent suspension from, a tree. Contributing to the pilot's fatal injuries was his attempt to jump out of the trike to a nearby tree limb.

## Findings

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

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

Personnel issues-Action/decision-Info processing/decision-Understanding/comprehension-Pilot

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Private; Sport Pilot	<b>Age:</b>	50
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine Land	<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None
<b>Flight Time:</b>	150 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	RAINBOW AIRCRAFT (PTY) LTD	<b>Registration:</b>	Unreg
<b>Model/Series:</b>	AEROTRIKE	<b>Engines:</b>	Reciprocating
<b>Operator:</b>	EASLER, KELLY LEE	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Rotax
<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	503
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual Conditions	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Dusk
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	SPA, 801 ft msl	<b>Weather Information Source:</b>	Weather Observation Facility
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:</b>	5 knots / , 190°
<b>Temperature:</b>	19° C	<b>Visibility</b>	10 Miles
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	Chesnee, SC (None)	<b>Destination:</b>	Chesnee, SC (None)

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>	Private (None)	<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	Dirt; Grass/turf
<b>Runway Used:</b>	25	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	Unknown
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>	1875 ft / 68 ft		

## Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Latitude, Longitude:	35.062778, -81.891667 (est)		

## Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Timothy W Monville	Adopted Date:	04/26/2016
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.		
Investigation Docket:	<a href="http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=91218">http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=91218</a>		

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