



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	Penwell, TX	Accident Number:	CEN16LA203
Date & Time:	06/01/2016, 2046 CDT	Registration:	N5679G
Aircraft:	CESSNA 150	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:	Controlled flight into terr/obj (CFIT)	Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The commercial pilot telephoned his wife from his car and told her he was en route to his company's airplane hangar and was going to kill himself. She alerted her husband's employer, who then alerted the police department. The pilot took the airplane without the company's permission and then flew it into a 138-ft-tall silo. The autopsy report cited the manner of death as being "consistent with suicide."

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

The pilot's intentional flight into a silo.

Findings

Personnel issues	Suicide - Pilot (Cause) Use of medication/drugs - Pilot Use of alcohol - Pilot
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Factual Information

HISTORY OF FLIGHT

On June 1, 2016, about 2046 central daylight time, a Cessna 150K, N5679G, collided in-flight with a steel silo in Penwell, Texas. The pilot, the sole occupant on board, was fatally injured. The airplane was destroyed. The airplane was registered to and operated by LM Air Patrol Service, Inc., Midland, Texas, under the provisions of 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91 as a personal flight. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the accident, and no flight plan had been filed. The local flight originated from Odessa Airport-Schlemeyer Field (ODO), Odessa, Texas, about 2000.

According to LM Air Patrol Service, the pilot was their employee and had been hired to provide aerial pipeline patrol services. He had flown the airplane on a pipeline patrol mission earlier that day and had secured the airplane about 1500. That evening, the pilot took the airplane without the company's permission. According to the Midland, Texas, Police Department's report, the pilot telephoned his wife and told her he was en route to the hangar and was going to kill himself. She alerted her husband's employer, who in turn alerted the Midland Police Department. The airplane was flying eastbound when it struck a 138-foot tall silo at the Cemex plant, located at 16501 W. Murphy St. in Penwell, Texas.

PERSONNEL (CREW) INFORMATION

The 45-year-old pilot held a commercial pilot certificate with airplane single/multiengine and instrument ratings. His last medical certificate, dated February 14, 2015, contained the following: "Medical certificate denied. Multiple alcohol-related events. Certificate surrendered by airman on 04/06/2016."

According to LM Air Patrol Service, the pilot had logged a total of 5,359 flight hours, of which 450 hours were in the Cessna 150 and 2,600 hours were in multiengine aircraft. In the last 90 and 30 days, the pilot had logged about 300 and 100 hours respectively, and had logged 5 hours in the last 24 hours.

AIRCRAFT INFORMATION

N5679G, serial number 15071179, a model 150K, was manufactured by the Cessna Aircraft Company in 1969. According to LM Air Patrol Service, It was modified and powered by a Continental O-320-E2D engine, rated at 150 horsepower, driving a McCauley 2-blade, all-metal, fixed pitch propeller (model number 1C172/TM7458). The last annual inspection was accomplished on June 15, 2015, at an airframe total time of 3,987 hours. The engine had accrued 1,396 hours since major overhaul.

METEOROLOGICAL INFORMATION

The following pertinent weather observation was recorded at Odessa Airport-Schlemeyer Field (ODO), Odessa, Texas, at 2053 CDT: Wind, 040° at 18 knots; visibility, 10 miles; sky condition,

few clouds at 6,500 feet, scattered clouds at 8,000 feet; temperature, 22° Celsius (C.); dew point 15°; altimeter setting, 29.92 inches of mercury. Remarks: Lightning distant all quadrants.

MEDICAL AND PATHOLOGICAL INFORMATION

An autopsy was performed by the Tarrant County Medical Examiner's Office. According to its report, death was attributed to "massive blunt force trauma . . . consistent with history of light aircraft flown into structure (cement plant tower). No notable natural disease" was noted. The manner of death was "consistent with suicide."

Toxicology screens were conducted by both FAA's Civil Aeromedical Institute (CAMI) and the Tarrant County Medical Examiner's Office. According to CAMI's report, carbon monoxide and cyanide tests were not performed, but 133 (mg/dL, mg/hg) ethanol was detected in brain tissue and 131 (mg/dL, mg/hg) ethanol was detected in muscle tissue. In addition, 0.036 (ug/ml, ug/g) alprazolam was detected in liver tissue and lung tissue (no quantity given in the latter), 1.961 (ug/ml, ug/g) butalbital was detected in liver tissue, 0.933 (ug/ml, ug/g) butalbital was detected in lung tissue, and metoprolol detected in Lung and liver tissue (no quantities given). According to the Tarrant County's toxicology report, the pilot's muscle tissue was positive for ethanol (0.030 g/dL), benzodiazepine, and alprazolam (117 ng/mL)

According to FAA's Forensic Toxicology Drug Information and FAA's Research Medical Officer, Alprazolam (Xanax®, Xanax® XR and Niravam®) is a prescription medication used in the treatment of panic and anxiety disorders. It is in a class of medications called benzodiazepines. The side effects of alprazolam are typical of benzodiazepines and include sedation, impaired coordination and muscle relaxation, and may impair mental and/or physical ability required for the performance of potentially hazardous tasks (e.g., driving, operating heavy machinery); therefore, "use could possibly represent a violation of 14 CFR Part 61.53(a), Part 91.17(a)(3) and/or Part 67." Butalbital (Esgic®, Fiorinal®, Fioricet®) is commonly used in combination with other drugs, such as acetaminophen and caffeine, to treat mild to moderate pain, migraines and tension headaches, and may impair mental and/or physical ability required for the performance of potentially hazardous tasks (e.g., driving, operating heavy machinery). "This medication is disqualifying for aeromedical certification; therefore, use could possibly represent a violation of 14 CFR Part 61.53(a), Part 91.17(a)(3) and/or Part 67." Metoprolol (Lopressor®, Toprol® XL) is a prescription medication and beta-adrenergic receptor antagonist, or 'beta blocker,' used in the treatment of hypertension and certain arrhythmias.

History of Flight

Enroute

Controlled flight into terr/obj (CFIT) (Defining event)

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	45, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Unknown
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	None None	Last Medical Exam:	02/14/2015
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	05/15/2015
Flight Time:	5359 hours (Total, all aircraft), 450 hours (Total, this make and model), 5359 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 300 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 100 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Manufacturer:	CESSNA	Registration:	N5679G
Model/Series:	150 K	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1969	Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	15071179
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	06/15/2015, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1600 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3987 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-320-E2D
Registered Owner:	LM Air Patrol Service, Inc.	Rated Power:	150 hp
Operator:	LM Air Patrol Service, Inc.	Air Carrier Operating Certificate:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Observation Facility, Elevation:	KODO, 3004 ft msl	Observation Time:	2053 CDT
Distance from Accident Site:	17 Nautical Miles	Condition of Light:	Night
Direction from Accident Site:	45°	Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 6500 ft agl	Temperature/Dew Point:	22° C / 15° C
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility	10 Miles
Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	18 knots, 40°	Visibility (RVR):	
Altimeter Setting:	29.98 inches Hg	Visibility (RVV):	
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Odessa, TX (KODO)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Penwell, TX	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	CDT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Arnold W Scott	Adopted Date:	12/12/2016
Additional Participating Persons:	Dawna Gournic; FAA Flight Standards District Office; Lubbock, TX		
Publish Date:	12/12/2016		
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.		
Investigation Docket:	http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=93293		

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