



# NTSB RECORD OF CONVERSATION

**Lynn Spencer**  
**Air Safety Investigator**  
**Eastern Region**

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**Date: 3/27/2019**  
**Person Interviewed: Douglas E. Fox (Pilot)**  
**NTSB Accident Number: ERA19LA138**

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The following is a summary of a conversation that occurred with the above-named individual:

- The private pilot stated that he had “topped it off” in the morning, and double-checked to see that it was topped off with fuel before departing.
- He performed a typical preflight and performed an engine runup and double checked the magnetos and checked the carburetor heat.
- After a 5-minute run-up and taxi, he departed on Runway 27. He stated that he made sure temperature came up on cylinder heads and that he had oil pressure.
- The takeoff roll took longer than usual, and that he almost aborted his takeoff as the airplane did not seem to be developing sufficient power, although he did not check RPM.
- He sensed something was wrong when he was farther down the runway than normal, waiting for the tail to come up at 40 mph. He stated that “the tail just didn't want to come up.”
- He thought for a split second that he should abort but felt that given the runway left that he should try to fly it. He was “way down” the runway when he finally got airborne and stated that he barely cleared trees at the end of the runway.
- He believed he only reached about 70 ft agl before the left wing dropped because he was starting to stall, so he pushed the nose down, then right wing dropped, and he again pushed down nose and landed straight ahead in a young pine plantation.
- He stated that a fire broke out within one minute of his egress from the airplane.





# NTSB RECORD OF CONVERSATION

**Lynn Spencer**  
**Air Safety Investigator**  
**Eastern Region**

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**Date: 4/22/2019; 2:15 pm**  
**Person Interviewed: Douglas E. Fox (Pilot)**  
**NTSB Accident Number: ERA19LA138**

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The following is a summary of a conversation that occurred with the above-named individual:

- Mr. Fox estimated that there 8-10 minutes between engine start-up and takeoff. He said he wanted to ensure that the engine was fully warmed up, so he allowed at least 5 minutes of the engine running at idle to allow for the warm-up.
- He said that next time he will keep carburetor heat on until takeoff.
- He reported that several friends who heard him takeoff said that, by the sound of the engine, they thought he was landing.



## Spencer Lynn

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**From:** Doug Fox [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 2, 2019 5:43 PM  
**To:** Spencer Lynn  
**Subject:** RE: Follow-up questions

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Lynn,

1. Preflight regarding weight and balance I used:  
805 Empty weight  
72 Pounds in header tank – 12 gallons  
40 Pounds in both wing tanks (Approx 6 gallons each)\*  
200 for me  
5 Misc for headsets, iFly, Traffic Watch (approx.)  
1122 Total  
Using Gross weight of 1250

\*NOTE I just realized I incorrectly stated 72 pounds fuel on the 6120 form but included it in the takeoff weight. I actually had around 3 gallons in each wing tank or approximately 112 pounds (18 gallons give or take).

Empty aircraft	weight	arm	moment
rt wheel	384	65	24960
lft. Wheel	377	65	24505
tailwheel	44	236.5	10406
total	805		59871
empty cg	74.37391		

cg range 74 to 79  
gross weight 1250 lbs.

empty aircraft	805	74.37391	59871
Main Tank	72	49	3528
pilot/pass	200	84	16800
Wing tanks	40	84	3360
Baggage	5	107	535
total	1122		84094
cg	74.95009		

cg range 74 to 79  
gross weight 1250 lbs.

2. I have an established “hard” abort point but was preoccupied with watching airspeed and controlling direction that I passed it without realizing and thus decided to commit to takeoff when I reached rotation speed to avoid running into the threshold barrier and cross the road at the end when I realized I had passed it.
3. I routinely operate out of this field and from this runway.
4. I have operated on both warmer and cooler days and with heavier loads.

One other note, I realized another mistake on the 6120, and that is under the propeller. The propeller was a ground adjustable type. I inadvertently listed it as fixed pitch.



Sincerely,  
Doug Fox

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**From:** Spencer Lynn [mailto:[REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 2, [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Follow-up questions

Good morning, Mr. Fox,

I had a few questions that I was hoping you could clarify for me.

- 1) Can you tell me a bit about your preflight planning, particularly with regard to weight and balance and takeoff distance?
- 2) Had you established an abort point if the airplane wasn't performing as expected?
- 3) Do you routinely operate out of this field?
- 4) Was your previous experience always on colder days, or colder times of the days (morning vs. afternoon)?

Thanks very much, and have a lovely day.

Lynn Spencer  
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TO: Mr. Gregory King

FROM: Douglas Fox

SUBJECT: Statement of Crash N30271

DATE: 3/27/19

As per your request, the following statement is provided:

At approximately 1700 hrs on 3/26/19 after taxiing and normal run up I took off on runway 27 at FL10. Winds were light and variable, humidity was high, temperature was around 78 degrees F and I was planning on staying in the pattern. During rollout I noticed it took longer than usual to get up to speed and lift the tail which is normally at 40 MPH. I briefly considered aborting but the tail did raise and when I approached 50 MPH which is when I usually rotated, the plane became airborne. I didn't feel that the plane was developing the usual power but I didn't look at the tach, just the airspeed indicator. I had used up a significant portion of the runway and in hindsight I feel that an aborted takeoff at that time could have been more catastrophic and could have resulted in cartwheeling and entering the road at the end of the runway.

As the plane slowly climbed I barely cleared the height of the trees at the end of the runway and soon after the left wing dropped which I immediately corrected and then the right wing immediately dropped and I realized it was trying to stall. That led me to lower the nose to counter the stall. This happened in a 2 or 3 second timeframe. My altitude was insufficient to recover and I landed straight ahead in a young pine plantation. Within 1 minute after I egressed from the place, a fire broke out which consumed the plane. I was uninjured and a small brush fire ensued which was extinguished by the local fire department.

Let me know if you need more information. Thank you.

Douglas E. Fox