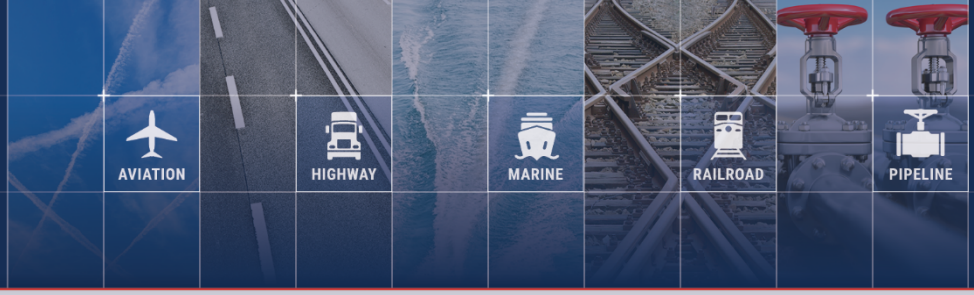

Aviation Investigation Factual Report

Location:	Wrightwood, California	**Accident Number:**	LAX06FA148
Date & Time:	April 23, 2006, 11:18 Local	**Registration:**	N2620S
Aircraft:	Cessna T337C	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Defining Event:		**Injuries:**	2 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Factual Information

HISTORY OF FLIGHT

On April 23, 2006, about 1118 Pacific daylight time, a Cessna T337C, N2620S, cruised into rising mountainous terrain about 3 miles west of Wrightwood, California. The pilot owned and operated the airplane, and it was substantially damaged during the impact sequence and subsequent ground fire in the Angeles National Forest. The non-instrument rated private pilot and passenger were killed during the personal flight. Instrument meteorological conditions prevailed, and no flight plan had been filed. The flight was performed under the provisions of Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 91, and it originated from Lancaster, California, about 1052.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reported that the pilot had requested, and was receiving, visual flight rules (VFR) radar flight following service after being identified on radar at 1054. The pilot advised the controller that he intended to fly to San Diego, California, and he requested a cloud top report. About 1059, the controller responded he did not have cloud top information for the requested geographic area.

A review of the airplane's radar-recorded flight track indicated that it climbed after departing from the General Wm. J. Fox Airfield, Lancaster (elevation 2351 feet msl). By 1100 the airplane had reached 6,400 feet and was proceeding in a southeasterly direction. By 1112:11 it had reached 9,400 feet. The airplane continued gaining altitude, and by 1114:11 it was at 10,200 feet and was tracking in a southerly direction.

Seconds thereafter the airplane descended and its course changed. The radar track indicates that the airplane turned left approximately 270 degrees over a 3-minute period while descending. From 1115:59 to 1116:59, the airplane descended from 9,600 to 9,300 feet.

About 1116, the controller notified the pilot that radar service was being terminated and to contact another controller upon flying through the [Cajon] pass. The pilot responded by stating that he had just gotten himself "in the soup." The controller asked the pilot to say his intentions. The pilot replied that he was going to "try to get out of it." The controller advised the pilot that his minimum vectoring altitude for instrument flying in the area was 11,600 feet, and that 2 miles north it was 10,500 feet.

The pilot did not respond to this information. There were no further radio or radar contacts with the accident airplane. By 1117:47, the airplane had descended to 8,500 feet. The airplane was subsequently located within 0.1 mile from its last recorded location.

Near the time of the accident, a skier was located close to the top of the Mountain High West

(ski) Resort. The Resort is located less than 3/4-mile from the accident site, and situated about 7,000 feet msl. The skier reported to sheriff's deputies hearing the sound of an airplane's engine. Thereafter, he heard a "thud" sound, and the engine noise was not heard again. The skier reported that he was not able to see the sky because the clouds covered the top of the mountain.

PERSONNEL INFORMATION

The pilot, age 52, held a private pilot certificate for airplane single-engine land and airplane multiengine land limited to center thrust. He was issued a Second Class aviation medical certificate on March 15, 2006, with no limitations.

A review of the pilot's total flight hours, as reported on FAA aviation medical certificate applications, indicated the following: 42 hours in February 1980; 200 hours in June 1992; 400 hours in December 1994; 600 hours in January 1996; 2,385 hours in March 1997 (including 100 hours during the preceding 6 months); 2,637 hours in August 1998 (including 103 hours during the preceding 6 months). The next medical certificate was dated March 15, 2006. On the application for this certificate the pilot reported 2,792 hours, and zero hours during the preceding 6-months.

On an insurance application for the accident airplane, dated March 28, 2006, the pilot indicated having a total of 2,500 hours including 250 hours of flight time in the accident model of airplane, and 750 hours of multiengine flight time.

A flight record logbook bearing the pilot's name was found in the wreckage and was examined. It listed flights from October, 1977, through March, 1980, showing a total flight time of 77.3 hours. Thereafter in the logbook, after numerous blank pages, an entry dated March 31, 2006, indicated that the pilot flew in a Cessna 172 for 1.1 hours during which he had dual flight instruction. On the last page of the logbook an entry, by the same flight instructor, indicated that the pilot had received a regulatory flight review. The entry was dated April 1, 2006. Neither the flight time nor the model of airplane was indicated for the flight review.

AIRCRAFT INFORMATION

Charred remnants of the airplane's maintenance records were located in the wreckage. No current records indicating the last annual inspection were observed.

The pilot had recently purchased the airplane. FAA records indicated a Bill of Sale in favor of the pilot's company dated April 12, 2006.

METEOROLOGICAL INFORMATION

The Southern California Logistics Airport in Victorville, California, is located about 22 nm northeast of the accident site. The airport's elevation is 2,885 feet msl. At 1058 the airport

recorded the following weather: Surface visibility 10 miles; wind 180 degrees at 12 knots; and a broken sky condition with clouds at 9,000 feet above the ground.

AIDS TO NAVIGATION

According to FAA records of facility operations, all electronic aids to navigation in the vicinity of the accident site were functional.

WRECKAGE AND IMPACT INFORMATION

The initial point of impact (IPI) was located less than an estimated 50 feet from the top of a mountain's ridgeline, about 2.8 nm west (260 degrees, magnetic) of Wrightwood. The IPI's ground level elevation is between 7,900 and 7,960 feet msl. In the vicinity of the IPI, estimated 40- to 60-foot-tall trees were located that exhibited severed tree trunks and branches.

Fragmented airplane components were observed distributed over at least a 235-foot-long by about 50-foot-wide track west-southwest of the IPI. The ground track's elevation varied between the IPI at 7,900 feet msl (eastern portion of wreckage) and 7,970 feet msl (western portion of wreckage). The separated airframe components were located adjacent to numerous felled branches. The components consisted of sections of wing, flap, aileron, propellers, and a fuel tank suspended from branches about 15 feet above the ground. The front engine was located at the western side of the wreckage area. The cockpit was observed destroyed by fire.

MEDICAL AND PATHOLOGICAL INFORMATION

On April 25, 2006, the Department of the Coroner, County of Los Angeles, California, performed an autopsy on the pilot. The cause of death was reported as multiple blunt trauma and thermal injuries.

The FAA's Bioaeronautical Sciences Research Laboratory, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, performed forensic toxicology on specimens from the pilot. The toxicology report stated that no ethanol was detected in the examined specimens. Dextromethorphan was detected in urine and liver, and Triamterene was present in urine and liver.

TESTS AND RESEARCH

Airframe and Propeller Examination

The airplane was recovered and examined. The orientation between the aft crushed airframe structure and vertically severed tree trunks was consistent with a near wings level impact. The landing gear was in the retracted position. All of the airplane's flight control surfaces were accounted for. All flight control cables that were observed severed exhibited a broomstraw appearance. An estimated 5 to 6 gallons of fuel was observed in the fractured fuel tanks. The

vacuum pump's vanes and the drive coupling were found intact. The propeller blades exhibited torsional deformation and s-bending signatures. No evidence was noted of a preimpact fire.

Engine Examination

The turbocharger's exhaust was devoid of foreign objects, the fuel screens were clear, the spark plugs exhibited normal wear signatures according to the engine participant. No evidence was observed of any preimpact mechanical malfunction. See the airplane and engine manufacturers' reports included in this accident docket for additional examination details.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	**Age:**	53,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	**Seat Occupied:**	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	**Restraint Used:**	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	**Second Pilot Present:**	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	**Toxicology Performed:**	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Without waivers/limitations	**Last FAA Medical Exam:**	March 1, 2006
Occupational Pilot:	No	**Last Flight Review or Equivalent:**	April 1, 2006
Flight Time:	2792 hours (Total, all aircraft), 250 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	**Registration:**	N2620S
Model/Series:	T337C	**Aircraft Category:**	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		**Amateur Built:**	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Restricted (Special)	**Serial Number:**	337-0920
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	**Seats:**	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	**Certified Max Gross Wt.:**	4500 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		**Engines:**	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		**Engine Manufacturer:**	Continental
ELT:		**Engine Model/Series:**	TSIO-360-A/B
Registered Owner:	On file	**Rated Power:**	210 Horsepower
Operator:	On file	**Operating Certificate(s) Held:**	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument (IMC)	**Condition of Light:**	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	VCV,2885 ft msl	**Distance from Accident Site:**	22 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	10:58 Local	**Direction from Accident Site:**	34°
Lowest Cloud Condition:		**Visibility**	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 9000 ft AGL	**Visibility (RVR):**	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	12 knots / None	**Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:**	/
Wind Direction:	180°	**Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:**	/
Altimeter Setting:	29.98 inches Hg	**Temperature/Dew Point:**	12°C / 3°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Lancaster, CA (WJF)	**Type of Flight Plan Filed:**	None
Destination:	San Diego, CA (SEE)	**Type of Clearance:**	None
Departure Time:	10:52 Local	**Type of Airspace:**	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 Fatal	**Aircraft Fire:**	On-ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	**Aircraft Explosion:**	None
Total Injuries:	2 Fatal	**Latitude, Longitude:**	34.363334,-117.690002

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Pollack, Wayne
Additional Participating Persons:	Frank Motter; Federal Aviation Administration; Van Nuys, CA Steve Miller; Cessna Aircraft Company; Wichita, KS Josh Cawthra; Teledyne Continental Motors; Mobile, AL
Report Date:	February 4, 2008
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	The NTSB traveled to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=63561