



Aviation Investigation Final Report

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|--------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| Location: | Hartington, Nebraska | Accident Number: | CEN20CA331 |
| Date & Time: | July 27, 2020, 07:45 Local | Registration: | N9278G |
| Aircraft: | Cessna A188 | Aircraft Damage: | Substantial |
| Defining Event: | Miscellaneous/other | Injuries: | 1 None |
| Flight Conducted Under: | Part 137: Agricultural | | |

Analysis

The pilot reported that, before conducting a local, aerial application flight, he changed the engine oil. After refueling and loading the airplane with chemicals, the pilot departed. Shortly after takeoff, the windshield became covered with oil, which limited the pilot's visibility. He turned the airplane left toward a grass runway. The pilot did not dump the chemical load, and the airplane had a low airspeed and began to lose altitude. The pilot was not able to attain a climb, so he chose to conduct a forced landing in a cornfield near the end of the runway, during which the wing sustained substantial damage. The pilot reported that there were no mechanical malfunctions or failures with the airplane that would have precluded normal operation and that the reason the oil covered the windshield was that he had not reinstalled the oil cap after changing the oil. He added that he "had gotten out of ...[his] routine" while performing the oil change and that "complacency" and being in a "hurry were also some factors" in the accident.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

The pilot's failure to ensure that the engine oil cap was installed before takeoff, which resulted in the oil obscuring the pilot's view through the windshield and necessitated a forced landing on unsuitable terrain. Contributing to the accident were the pilot's complacency and self-induced pressure to complete the flight.

Findings

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| Aircraft | Oil - Inadequate inspection |
| Aircraft | Oil - Fluid level |
| Personnel issues | Preflight inspection - Pilot |

Factual Information

History of Flight

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|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Prior to flight | Aircraft inspection event |
| Takeoff | Miscellaneous/other (Defining event) |
| Emergency descent | Off-field or emergency landing |
| Landing | Collision during takeoff/land |

Pilot Information

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|----------------------------------|--|--|----------------|
| Certificate: | Commercial; Flight instructor; Private | Age: | 44, Male |
| Airplane Rating(s): | Single-engine land | Seat Occupied: | Single |
| Other Aircraft Rating(s): | None | Restraint Used: | Unknown |
| Instrument Rating(s): | Airplane | Second Pilot Present: | No |
| Instructor Rating(s): | Airplane single-engine | Toxicology Performed: | No |
| Medical Certification: | Class 2 Unknown | Last FAA Medical Exam: | July 15, 2020 |
| Occupational Pilot: | Yes | Last Flight Review or Equivalent: | April 11, 2020 |
| Flight Time: | 2211.6 hours (Total, all aircraft), 143.5 hours (Total, this make and model), 2050 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 170 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 127 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 0 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft) | | |

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

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|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Aircraft Make: | Cessna | Registration: | N9278G |
| Model/Series: | A188 B | Aircraft Category: | Airplane |
| Year of Manufacture: | 1973 | Amateur Built: | |
| Airworthiness Certificate: | Restricted (Special) | Serial Number: | 18801444 |
| Landing Gear Type: | Tailwheel | Seats: | 1 |
| Date/Type of Last Inspection: | May 1, 2020 Annual | Certified Max Gross Wt.: | 3300 lbs |
| Time Since Last Inspection: | | Engines: | 1 Reciprocating |
| Airframe Total Time: | 4954.4 Hrs | Engine Manufacturer: | Continental |
| ELT: | Not installed | Engine Model/Series: | IO-520-D112 |
| Registered Owner: | Skyview Applicators LLC | Rated Power: | 300 Horsepower |
| Operator: | BECKER FLYING SERVICE INC | Operating Certificate(s) Held: | Agricultural aircraft (137) |
| Operator Does Business As: | | Operator Designator Code: | PTNG |

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

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|---|----------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Conditions at Accident Site: | Visual (VMC) | Condition of Light: | Day |
| Observation Facility, Elevation: | KYKN, 1172 ft msl | Distance from Accident Site: | 17 Nautical Miles |
| Observation Time: | 07:56 Local | Direction from Accident Site: | 344° |
| Lowest Cloud Condition: | Clear | Visibility | 10 miles |
| Lowest Ceiling: | None | Visibility (RVR): | |
| Wind Speed/Gusts: | 4 knots / None | Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Wind Direction: | 330° | Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Altimeter Setting: | 30.11 inches Hg | Temperature/Dew Point: | 19°C / 17°C |
| Precipitation and Obscuration: | No Obscuration; No Precipitation | | |
| Departure Point: | Hartington, NE (0B4) | Type of Flight Plan Filed: | |
| Destination: | Hartington, NE (0B4) | Type of Clearance: | None |
| Departure Time: | 07:45 Local | Type of Airspace: | Class G |

Airport Information

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|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|
| Airport: | HARTINGTON MUNI/ BUD BECKER FL 0B4 | Runway Surface Type: | |
| Airport Elevation: | 1388 ft msl | Runway Surface Condition: | Dry |
| Runway Used: | | IFR Approach: | None |
| Runway Length/Width: | | VFR Approach/Landing: | Forced landing |

Wreckage and Impact Information

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|----------------------------|--------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Crew Injuries: | 1 None | Aircraft Damage: | Substantial |
| Passenger Injuries: | | Aircraft Fire: | None |
| Ground Injuries: | | Aircraft Explosion: | None |
| Total Injuries: | 1 None | Latitude, Longitude: | 42.603054,-97.253608(est) |

Administrative Information

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| Investigator In Charge (IIC): | Malinowski, Edward |
| Additional Participating Persons: | Craig A Brumley; Federal Aviation Administration; Lincoln, NE Kurt Gibson; Continental Motors; Mobile, AL Peter J Basile; Textron Aviation; Wichita, KS |
| Original Publish Date: | May 6, 2021 |
| Last Revision Date: | |
| Investigation Class: | Class 4 |
| Note: | This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB. |
| Investigation Docket: | https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=101768 |

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The NTSB does not assign fault or blame for an accident or incident; rather, as specified by NTSB regulation, “accident/incident investigations are fact-finding proceedings with no formal issues and no adverse parties ... and are not conducted for the purpose of determining the rights or liabilities of any person” (Title 49 *Code of Federal Regulations* section 831.4). Assignment of fault or legal liability is not relevant to the NTSB’s statutory mission to improve transportation safety by investigating accidents and incidents and issuing safety recommendations. In addition, statutory language prohibits the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report (Title 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b)). A factual report that may be admissible under 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b) is available [here](#).