



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Palmetto, Florida	Accident Number:	ERA21LA017
Date & Time:	October 11, 2020, 13:30 Local	Registration:	N8698H
Aircraft:	North American Navion	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:	Loss of control on ground	Injuries:	1 Minor, 3 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The commercial pilot was attempting to depart from a turf runway in gusting, left-quartering headwind conditions. He applied full power and was utilizing a soft-field takeoff technique. As the airplane began to lift off, it encountered a “large wind gust” from the left and departed the runway to the right. The pilot’s remedial actions had “no effect,” and the airplane impacted a row of hangars that ran parallel to the runway. The airplane was destroyed by impact damage and a postcrash fire. The pilot reported that there were no preaccident mechanical malfunctions or failures with the airplane that would have prevented normal operation.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

The pilot’s failure to maintain directional control during takeoff in gusting crosswind conditions, which led to a runway excursion.

Findings

Personnel issues	Aircraft control - Pilot
Aircraft	Directional control - Not attained/maintained
Environmental issues	Gusts - Effect on operation
Environmental issues	Airport structure - Effect on operation

Factual Information

History of Flight

Takeoff	Loss of control on ground (Defining event)
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Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline transport; Commercial	Age:	53, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Lap only
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 1 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	August 7, 2020
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	4500 hours (Total, all aircraft), 234 hours (Total, this make and model), 94 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	North American	Registration:	N8698H
Model/Series:	Navion	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1947	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	NAV-4-689
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	February 12, 2020 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2750 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	40 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	4816.9 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Installed	Engine Model/Series:	E-225
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	225
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	48X,27 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:	15:30 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:		Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	11 knots / 19 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	220°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	31.7°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	Light - None - Rain		
Departure Point:	Palmetto, FL	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	
Destination:	Brooksville, FL (BKV)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	Airport Manatee 48X	Runway Surface Type:	Grass/turf
Airport Elevation:	27 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Soft;Wet
Runway Used:	25	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	3120 ft / 100 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	1 Minor, 2 None	Aircraft Fire:	On-ground
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Minor, 3 None	Latitude, Longitude:	27.642939,-82.520061(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Rayner, Brian
Additional Participating Persons:	Kevan Ross; FAA/FSDO; Tampa, FL
Original Publish Date:	July 15, 2021
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class 4
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=102130

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant events in other modes of transportation—railroad, transit, highway, marine, pipeline, and commercial space. We determine the probable causes of the accidents and events we investigate, and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future occurrences. In addition, we conduct transportation safety research studies and offer information and other assistance to family members and survivors for each accident or event we investigate. We also serve as the appellate authority for enforcement actions involving aviation and mariner certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and US Coast Guard, and we adjudicate appeals of civil penalty actions taken by the FAA.

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](#).