



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Kimberling City, Missouri	Accident Number:	CEN21LA014
Date & Time:	October 10, 2020, 13:30 Local	Registration:	N3445Q
Aircraft:	Piper PA32R	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:	Collision during takeoff/land	Injuries:	2 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot reported that he moved the airplane out of the hangar using a tow bar and his personal vehicle. The pilot added that he did not remove the tow bar from the airplane. The pilot and passenger then departed on a cross-country flight. Witnesses at the airport notified the pilot by radio that the tow bar was still attached. The pilot then entered the traffic pattern to land at the airport. During the approach the tow bar, which was hanging from the airplane's nose wheel, impacted and got entangled in trees. The airplane then impacted ground objects and terrain. A post-crash fire ensued and destroyed the airplane. The pilot added that he did not know why he got so low on the approach to the airport.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

The pilot's inadequate preflight inspection, which resulted in his inadvertent departure with the tow bar connected to the nose wheel, and the low approach while returning to the airport, which allowed the tow bar to contact trees.

Findings

Personnel issues	Preflight inspection - Pilot
Aircraft	Descent/approach/glide path - Not attained/maintained
Environmental issues	Tree(s) - Contributed to outcome

Factual Information

History of Flight

Approach	Collision during takeoff/land (Defining event)
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Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	73
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	None None	Last FAA Medical Exam:	July 2, 2018
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:			

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N3445Q
Model/Series:	PA32R	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	32R-7780312
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:		Engine Model/Series:	TIO-540
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	
Operator:	Kenneth Best	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KFWB	Distance from Accident Site:	6 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	18:35 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	360°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:		Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	4 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	150°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.21 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	24°C / 24°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Kimberling City, MO	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	Kimberling Airport MO64	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	1050 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:		IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	Precautionary landing

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Fire:	On-ground
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 Serious	Latitude, Longitude:	36.62629,-93.423947(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Hatch, Craig
Additional Participating Persons:	William Taylor; FAA FSDO; Kansas City, MO
Original Publish Date:	August 26, 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=102133

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](#).