



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Sturtevant, Wisconsin	Accident Number:	CEN22LA103
Date & Time:	January 18, 2022, 11:00 Local	Registration:	N90129
Aircraft:	Cessna 120	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Runway excursion	Injuries:	1 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

A review airport security camera footage showed the airplane was attempting to depart to the east. About a quarter way down the length of the runway after the beginning of the takeoff roll, the airplane departed the runway to the left (north). Airport security video footage showed the airplane travel over a flat grass field with the engine running. The footage did not show the airplane become airborne at any time, and the tailwheel appeared to remain on the ground during the runway excursion. The airplane came to rest after it impacted the cabin of an unoccupied, parked fuel truck. The pilot reported he recalled taxiing for takeoff and applying engine power for the takeoff; however, he was unable to recall any additional events.

Postaccident examination of the airframe revealed no mechanical anomalies.

The postaccident emergency care did not identify any medical conditions the pilot had that might have contributed to the accident. The pilot's pre-accident use of atorvastatin, famotidine, and fexofenadine, all non-impairing medications identified by toxicology testing of the pilot's samples, also did not contribute to the circumstances of this accident.

It is likely a loss of control occurred during the takeoff, which resulted in a runway excursion and a collision with an object. Based on the available evidence, the reason for the loss of control could not be determined.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

The pilot's loss of directional control during the takeoff for reasons that could not be determined based on the available evidence, which resulted in a runway excursion.

Findings

Not determined	(general) - Unknown/Not determined
Personnel issues	Aircraft control - Pilot
Aircraft	Directional control - Not attained/maintained

Factual Information

History of Flight

Takeoff	Unknown or undetermined
Takeoff	Runway excursion (Defining event)
Takeoff	Collision during takeoff/land

On January 18, 2022, about 1100 central standard time, a Cessna 120 airplane, N90129, was substantially damaged when it was involved in an accident near Sturtevant, Wisconsin. The private pilot sustained serious injuries. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 personal flight.

Security camera footage was obtained from the Sylvania Airport (C89), Sturtevant, Wisconsin. A review of the footage showed the airplane was attempting to depart to the east, using runway 08R. The takeoff roll was initiated and about a quarter way down the length of the runway, the airplane departed the runway to the left (north). The footage showed the airplane travel over a flat grass field with the engine running. The footage did not show the airplane become airborne at any time, and the tailwheel appeared to remain on the ground during the runway excursion. The airplane came to rest after it impacted the cabin of an unoccupied, parked fuel truck.

The pilot reported he recalled taxiing for takeoff and applying engine power for the takeoff, however he was unable to recall any additional events.

The airplane sustained substantial damage to the left wing, the left-wing lift struts, and the fuselage. Postaccident examination of the airframe revealed no mechanical anomalies. Flight control continuity and airframe to engine control continuity was established. The main landing gear brake lines sustained impact damage, which precluded a system brake test. The main wheels were found free to rotate, and the brake pads and rotors for both wheels showed minimal wear. No signs of foreign object debris jamming or restricting operation of the cockpit controls was noticed.

The pilot had reported no medical conditions and no use of medications to the FAA. Ketamine, fentanyl, propofol, and lidocaine were administered in the prehospital and immediate stages of his hospital care. No note is made in the hospital documentation of any identification of underlying natural disease such as a stroke or heart attack that may have been affecting the pilot prior to the collision of his airplane with the fuel truck.

Toxicology testing was performed by the FAA’s Forensic Sciences Laboratory on blood and urine left over from specimens obtained during the pilot’s initial hospital admission. The

results included medications administered during his post-crash care including ketamine and its metabolite norketamine, fentanyl and its metabolite norfentanyl, lidocaine, and propofol. In addition, atorvastatin, famotidine, and fexofenadine were identified, which are non-impairing medications.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	79, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Lap only
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 3 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	October 14, 2020
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	(Estimated) 2483 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N90129
Model/Series:	120 No Series Exists	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1946	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	9190
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	May 17, 2021 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1450 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	4733 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental Motors
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	C-85-12F
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	85 Horsepower
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:	On file	Operator Designator Code:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KENW, 743 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	7 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	10:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	172°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 9000 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:		Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	10 knots / None	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	None / None
Wind Direction:	160°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	N/A / N/A
Altimeter Setting:	29.86 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	1°C / -7°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Sturtevant, WI	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	East Troy, WI (57C)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	SYLVANIA C89	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	788 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	08R	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	2272 ft / 38 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Serious	Latitude, Longitude:	42.703127, -87.958972(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Hodges, Michael
Additional Participating Persons:	Michael Brockel; FAA Milwaukee FSDO; Milwaukee, WI Andrew Hall; Textron Aviation; Wichita, KS
Original Publish Date:	June 8, 2023
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class 3
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=104536

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](#).