



Aviation Investigation Final Report

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|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| Location: | Regent, North Dakota | Accident Number: | CEN23LA058 |
| Date & Time: | December 3, 2022, 16:09 Local | Registration: | N7659X |
| Aircraft: | Stinson 108-3 | Aircraft Damage: | Substantial |
| Defining Event: | Low altitude operation/event | Injuries: | 3 Minor |
| Flight Conducted Under: | Part 91: General aviation - Personal | | |

Analysis

The pilot reported that while maneuvering the airplane at low altitude to observe sculptures on the ground, he did not see the high-tension wires due to diverted attention and the setting sun. The airplane collided with the wires, the vertical stabilizer sheared off, and the engine seized. Subsequently, the airplane impacted terrain. The empennage and left wing sustained substantial damage. The pilot reported there were no mechanical malfunctions or failures that would have precluded normal operations.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

The pilot failed to maintain clearance from high tension wires while maneuvering at low altitude.

Findings

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| Aircraft | Altitude - Not attained/maintained |
| Environmental issues | Wire - Awareness of condition |
| Personnel issues | Monitoring environment - Pilot |

Factual Information

History of Flight

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| Maneuvering-low-alt flying | Low altitude operation/event (Defining event) |
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Pilot Information

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| Certificate: | Private | Age: | 52, Male |
| Airplane Rating(s): | Single-engine land | Seat Occupied: | Left |
| Other Aircraft Rating(s): | None | Restraint Used: | Unknown |
| Instrument Rating(s): | Airplane | Second Pilot Present: | No |
| Instructor Rating(s): | None | Toxicology Performed: | |
| Medical Certification: | Class 3 Without waivers/limitations | Last FAA Medical Exam: | February 9, 2021 |
| Occupational Pilot: | No | Last Flight Review or Equivalent: | February 23, 2021 |
| Flight Time: | 357.3 hours (Total, all aircraft), 285 hours (Total, this make and model), 276.9 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 1.2 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 1.2 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1.2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft) | | |

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

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|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Aircraft Make: | Stinson | Registration: | N7659X |
| Model/Series: | 108-3 | Aircraft Category: | Airplane |
| Year of Manufacture: | | Amateur Built: | |
| Airworthiness Certificate: | Unknown | Serial Number: | 1084859 |
| Landing Gear Type: | Tailwheel | Seats: | 4 |
| Date/Type of Last Inspection: | March 5, 2022 Annual | Certified Max Gross Wt.: | 2400 lbs |
| Time Since Last Inspection: | | Engines: | 1 Reciprocating |
| Airframe Total Time: | 1856.4 Hrs at time of accident | Engine Manufacturer: | Lycoming |
| ELT: | C91 installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident | Engine Model/Series: | O-435-C |
| Registered Owner: | On file | Rated Power: | 190 Horsepower |
| Operator: | On file | Operating Certificate(s) Held: | None |

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

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|---|----------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Conditions at Accident Site: | Visual (VMC) | Condition of Light: | Dusk |
| Observation Facility, Elevation: | KDIK, 2583 ft msl | Distance from Accident Site: | 25 Nautical Miles |
| Observation Time: | 15:56 Local | Direction from Accident Site: | 334° |
| Lowest Cloud Condition: | Clear | Visibility | 10 miles |
| Lowest Ceiling: | None | Visibility (RVR): | |
| Wind Speed/Gusts: | 7 knots / | Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual: | None / None |
| Wind Direction: | 260° | Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual: | N/A / N/A |
| Altimeter Setting: | 30.04 inches Hg | Temperature/Dew Point: | -6°C / -12°C |
| Precipitation and Obscuration: | No Obscuration; No Precipitation | | |
| Departure Point: | Mott, ND (3P3) | Type of Flight Plan Filed: | None |
| Destination: | Mott, ND (3P3) | Type of Clearance: | None |
| Departure Time: | 14:45 Local | Type of Airspace: | Class G |

Wreckage and Impact Information

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|----------------------------|---------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| Crew Injuries: | 1 Minor | Aircraft Damage: | Substantial |
| Passenger Injuries: | 2 Minor | Aircraft Fire: | None |
| Ground Injuries: | | Aircraft Explosion: | None |
| Total Injuries: | 3 Minor | Latitude, Longitude: | 46.428057,-102.52786 |

Administrative Information

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| Investigator In Charge (IIC): | Abraham, Laura |
| Additional Participating Persons: | Michael P. Linden; FAA; Fargo, ND |
| Original Publish Date: | March 2, 2023 |
| 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=106415 |

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](#).