



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	AUGUSTA, Kansas	Accident Number:	CHI98LA173
Date & Time:	May 24, 1998, 03:15 Local	Registration:	N5247J
Aircraft:	Cessna 310R	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	4 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot reported that shortly after takeoff he became disoriented in the fog. The airplane contacted powerlines southwest of the departure end of the airport. The powerlines were slightly below the airstrip field elevation. The airplane then traveled approximately 3/4 of a mile prior to impacting the terrain. It then continued to travel approximately 900 feet prior to contacting trees, coming to rest, and being destroyed by fire. The pilot received a weather briefing just prior to the takeoff. He was not issued, nor did he request current local conditions.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the pilot's inadequate evaluation of the current local weather conditions and his failure to maintain a climb after takeoff. Factors related to the accident were the fog, the powerlines, and spatial disorientation.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings

1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - FOG
2. (C) WEATHER EVALUATION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND

- 3. (C) CLIMB - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
- 4. (F) SPATIAL DISORIENTATION - PILOT IN COMMAND
- 5. (F) OBJECT - WIRE, TRANSMISSION

Occurrence #2: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Occurrence #4: ON GROUND/WATER COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: OTHER

Findings

- 6. OBJECT - TREE(S)

Factual Information

On May 24, 1998, at 0315 central daylight time, a Cessna 310R, N5247J, operated by a commercial pilot collided with powerlines followed by the terrain during an initial takeoff climb from the Augusta Municipal Airport, Augusta, Kansas. The pilot and three passengers were seriously injured. The airplane was substantially damaged. The 14 CFR Part 91 personal flight was operating in visual meteorological conditions and an IFR flight plan had been filed. The flight had originated just prior to the accident.

Purpose of the flight was to travel to Indianapolis, Indiana, to attend the Indianapolis 500 Race. The pilot contacted the Wichita Automated Flight Service Station (AFSS) on the evening prior to the flight to file an IFR flight plan. Just prior to the flight, the pilot once again contacted the Wichita AFSS to obtain a weather briefing. The pilot was issued the en route weather and the forecast for his destination. The pilot was not issued nor did he request any weather information for his departure area.

The NTSB Form 6120.1/2 which was completed for the pilot by the co-owner of the accident airplane stated the pilot's memory of the accident was still "fuzzy." The form continued to stated "Takeoff to the South was normal. Shortly after take off, apparently some ground fog was encountered. All he remembers after that is hitting some power lines, landing flat in field, and then slid across field into some trees (approx 1 mile south of end of runway and 1/4 west)." The pilot did state to an Inspector from the Federal Aviation Administration Wichita, Kansas, Flight Standards District Office (FSDO) that he became disoriented in the fog shortly after takeoff.

Inspection of the accident site and wreckage by the FSDO Inspector revealed the airplane contacted powerlines located south-southwest of the departure end of runway 18. The airplane then traveled approximately 3/4 of a mile where it impacted the terrain in an open field. The airplane continued to travel approximately 900 feet prior to contacting trees, coming to rest, and being destroyed by fire. The height of the powerlines which were contacted was slightly below the airstrip field elevation.

The 0254 cdt weather observation at the Jabara Airport located 9 miles northwest of the accident site reported the visibility as 1/2 mile with fog, and a vertical visibility of 100 feet, with a temperature and dewpoint of 13 degrees Celsius.

The 0255 cdt weather observation at the McConnell AFB located 11 miles southwest of the accident site reported the visibility as 7 miles, a few clouds at 25,000 feet, with a temperature and dewpoint of 17 degrees and 16 degrees Celsius respectively.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	70, Male
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:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	April 22, 1998
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	5500 hours (Total, all aircraft), 425 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N5247J
Model/Series:	310R 310R	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	310R0812
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	April 6, 1998 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	5500 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	27 Hrs	Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	4650 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Installed	Engine Model/Series:	IO-520
Registered Owner:	ROBERT H. SOUDERS	Rated Power:	285 Horsepower
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Night/bright
Observation Facility, Elevation:	3KM ,1420 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	9 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	02:54 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	310°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown	Visibility	0.5 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	100 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	4 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	70°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	13°C / 13°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	N/A - None - Fog		
Departure Point:	(3AU)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Destination:	INDIANAPOLIS , IN (IND)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	03:13 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	AUGUSTA MUNICIPAL 3AU	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	1328 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	3 Serious	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	4 Serious	Latitude, Longitude:	37.690185,-96.970245(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Sullivan, Pamela
Additional Participating Persons:	BRUCE ALLRED; WICHITA , KS JOHN KENT; MOBILE , AL FRED LEEPER; WICHITA , KS
Original Publish Date:	May 19, 1999
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=10890

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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](#).