



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	CENTRAL LAKE, Michigan	Accident Number:	CHI91DEM06
Date & Time:	July 10, 1991, 20:00 Local	Registration:	N86083
Aircraft:	AERONCA 11-AC	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

WITNESSES OBSERVED THE LIGHT, SINGLE ENGINED, AIRPLANE PERFORMING A CLIMB AFTER A TOUCH AND GO LANDING. DURING THE CLIMB WITNESSES REPORTED THAT THE AIRPLANE SUDDENLY PITCHED STRAIGHT DOWN AND DESCENDED INTO THE TERRAIN. AN ON SCENE INVESTIGATION DID NOT REVEAL ANY CONTROL, AIRFRAME, OR POWERPLANT CONDITIONS WHICH WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO SUCH AN UNCONTROLLED DESCENT. THE AIRSTRIP HAD A 3 DEGREE DOWNSLOPE FROM THE CENTER OF THE RUNWAY TOWARD BOTH THE APPROACH AND DEPARTURE ENDS. THE TERRAIN OFF THE DEPARTURE END OF THE RUNWAY DROPS SUDDENLY INTO AN APRX 300 FOOT DEEP VALLEY. INVESTIGATION REVEALED THE AIRPLANE'S LAST ANNUAL INSPECTION WAS 10 YEARS PRIOR TO THE ACCIDENT, THE PILOT'S STUDENT PILOT/THIRD CLASS MEDICAL CERTIFICATE WAS ISSUED APRX 13 YEARS PRIOR TO THE ACCIDENT, AND THAT THE PILOT'S LAST FLIGHT AS PIC WAS APRX TWO YEARS PRIOR TO THE ACCIDENT.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: A RESULT OF THE PILOT IN COMMAND NOT MAINTAINING AIRCRAFT CONTROL AND NOT PERFORMING REMEDIAL ACTION AFTER THE AIRPLANE ENTERED THE STEEP DESCENT. A FACTOR CONTRIBUTING TO THIS ACCIDENT WAS THE PILOT IN COMMAND'S LACK OF RECENT EXPERIENCE.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT

Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings

1. (F) LACK OF RECENT EXPERIENCE - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (C) AIRCRAFT CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) REMEDIAL ACTION - NOT PERFORMED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - EMERGENCY

Findings

4. TERRAIN CONDITION - MOUNTAINOUS/HILLY
5. TERRAIN CONDITION - GROUND

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	None	Age:	40, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Expired	Last FAA Medical Exam:	June 20, 1978
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	38 hours (Total, all aircraft), 38 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	AERONCA	Registration:	N86083
Model/Series:	11-AC 11-AC	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	11AC-507
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	June 26, 1981 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1250 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	470 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	1700 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	CONTINENTAL
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	A&C 65
Registered Owner:	TERRANCE A. GRAHM	Rated Power:	75 Horsepower
Operator:	TERRANCE A. GRAHM	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:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered	Visibility	20 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	0°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	19:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	NONE	Runway Surface Type:	Grass/turf
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	45.060981,-85.259986(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Elliott, Will

Additional Participating Persons: JOHN MILLER; GRAND RAPIDS , MI

Original Publish Date: December 4, 1992

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=14831>

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](#).