



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	MEADOW, Texas	Accident Number:	FTW96LA371
Date & Time:	September 3, 1996, 15:00 Local	Registration:	N3166H
Aircraft:	Air Tractor AT-301	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 137: Agricultural		

Analysis

According to the pilot, he arrived at the field and made a complete circuit of the job to locate all wires. The pilot stated that there were large east-west power lines on the north edge of the field and small east-west wires along the south end of the flat field. The pilot flew the first application swath south bound by flying under large wires, across the field, and over small wires on the south end of the field. He then turned the airplane around for the second swath and reversed the application pattern. On the north end of the field, the airplane's vertical stabilizer hit the large wires, destroying the fin and removing the rudder. The pilot reported that the airplane would only fly in a circle, so he dumped the plane's load and performed a forced landing to a cotton field.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to maintain clearance from the transmission wire. A factor was the lack of suitable terrain for a forced landing.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING - AERIAL APPLICATION

Findings

1. OBJECT - WIRE, TRANSMISSION

2. (C) CLEARANCE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING

Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY DESCENT/LANDING

Occurrence #3: ON GROUND/WATER ENCOUNTER WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

Findings

3. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - NONE SUITABLE

4. TERRAIN CONDITION - CROP

Factual Information

On September 3, 1996, at 1500 central daylight time, an Air Tractor AT-301, N3166H, was substantially damaged during an impact with transmission wires while maneuvering and the subsequent forced landing near Meadow, Texas. The commercial pilot, the sole occupant in the airplane, was not injured. The airplane was registered to and operated by Foshee Flying Service under Title 14 CFR Part 137. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed for the local aerial application flight which originated from Terry County Airport, Brownfield, Texas, approximately 15 minutes before the accident. A flight plan was not filed.

The pilot stated in the NTSB Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident Report that he "arrived at the field and made a complete circuit of the job to locate all wires." He further stated that there were "large east west power lines" on the north edge of the field and "small east west wires" along the south end of the "very flat field."

The pilot reported that he flew the first application swath southbound by flying under the "large wires," across the field, and over the "small wires" on the south end of the field. He then turned the airplane around for the second swath and reversed the application pattern. On the north end of the field, the airplane's vertical stabilizer "hit the large wires, destroying the fin" and "removing the rudder." The pilot reported that the airplane would only fly in a circle, so he dumped the plane's load and performed a forced landing to a cotton field. The landing gear separated from the airplane and two spars in the right wing were damaged.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	58, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	March 28, 1996
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	6272 hours (Total, all aircraft), 2000 hours (Total, this make and model), 6272 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 300 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 100 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Air Tractor	Registration:	N3166H
Model/Series:	AT-301 AT-301	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Restricted (Special)	Serial Number:	301-0549
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	1
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	June 27, 1996 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	6800 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	163 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	4188 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	P&W
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	R-1340-AN1
Registered Owner:	FOSHEE SPRAYING SERVICE, INC.	Rated Power:	600 Horsepower
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	JLPG

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:	Clear	Visibility	15 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:	32°C / 18°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	BROWNFIELD , TX (Q26)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	14:45 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:		Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	Forced landing

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	33.330966,-102.19976(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Struhsaker, James
Additional Participating Persons:	JOHN H BOATRRIGHT; LUBBOCK , TX
Original Publish Date:	August 25, 1997
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=19966

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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](#).