



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	NEW BRAUNFELS, Texas	Accident Number:	FTW88DRG03
Date & Time:	November 6, 1987, 09:15 Local	Registration:	N5303H
Aircraft:	HERMAN DRAGONFLY	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE EXPERIMENTAL, HOME BUILT, AIRCRAFT WAS ON ITS MAIDEN FLIHT. THE PILOT STATED HE INTENDED TO FLY THE PATTERN FOR A CHECK-OUT OF THE AIRCRAFT. THE PILOT INDICATED THAT HE HOPED TO GAIN ALTITUDE EARLY TO PERMIT RETURNING TO THE FIELD IN CASE OF AN ENGINE FAILURE BUT INSTEAD STALLED THE AIRCRAFT ON TAKEOFF.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings

1. (F) LIFT-OFF - PREMATURE - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (C) AIRSPEED(VS) - NOT OBTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) STALL - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	71,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
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 3 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	July 25, 1985
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	342 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	HERMAN	Registration:	N5303H
Model/Series:	DRAGONFLY DRAGONFLY	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental (Special)	Serial Number:	086
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	June 24, 1987 Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1075 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	1 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	2 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	Volkswagen
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	1800
Registered Owner:	MARCELLUS H HERMAN	Rated Power:	60 Horsepower
Operator:	MARCELLUS H. HERMAN	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:	Clear	Visibility	15 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/ None	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	10°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	14°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	09:15 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	NEW BRAUNFELS 3R5	Runway Surface Type:	Concrete
Airport Elevation:	820 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	4	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	5000 ft / 150 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	29.700176,-98.110275(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Greer, Edward
Additional Participating Persons:	ROBERT ANDERSON; SAN ANTONIO , TX
Original Publish Date:	January 11, 1989
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=22508

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](#).