



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	WELCH, West Virginia	Accident Number:	IAD96LA076
Date & Time:	May 10, 1996, 16:10 Local	Registration:	N6303S
Aircraft:	Cessna 150	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

Witnesses observed the airplane flying low and erratically. One witness indicated that the airplane nearly struck power lines in front of his house and that the airplane appeared to be 'doing tricks.' Another witness reported that he met the pilot and the passenger in a bar before they went to the airport, and that they '...bought a six pack of beer and each of them drank just a little out of one can.' The airplane impacted power lines, then collided with terrain. Toxicological test results for the pilot indicated 183.000 mg/dl of ethanol detected in the blood (0.183% BAC) and 228.000 mg/dl of ethanol detected in the urine.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the pilot's impairment of judgment and performance due to alcohol which led to his failure to maintain sufficient altitude to clear obstacles. A factor was his intentional buzzing.

Findings

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

Findings

1. (F) BUZZING - INTENTIONAL - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (C) PROPER ALTITUDE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

3. (C) IMPAIRMENT(ALCOHOL) - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. OBJECT - WIRE,TRANSMISSION

Factual Information

On May 10, 1996, at 1610 eastern daylight time, a Cessna 150, N6303S, sustained substantial damage when it collided with terrain after striking a static wire and power lines near Welch, West Virginia. The certificated private pilot and the one passenger sustained fatal injuries. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the accident, no flight plan was filed. The flight was conducted under 14 CFR 91. The aircraft departed Welch Municipal Airport (I25) on a local flight at approximately 1550.

One witness reported to the West Virginia State Police that he saw a plane "...the same one that was on TV at the crash scene. The plane was flying right here in front of the house and almost hit some power lines. I didn't see any smoke or anything. It appeared to be running fine. The plane looked like it was doing tricks or something. It would go straight up in the air and then come back down. Then I looked out a side window and saw the plane go straight up the hollow behind our house. About ...two (2) to five (5) minutes later I heard two (2) loud noises. Then I saw some white colored smoke blowing down from the area of some power lines. I just thought a transformer had blown up."

A second witness reported to the West Virginia State Police that he "...met up with [the pilot] and [the passenger] at [a bar] in Welch at 2:40 P.M. on the day they crashed. We decided to go up on the mountain so they could fly. They bought a six (6) pack of beer and each of them drank just a little out of one can." The witness reported that when they got to the airport the pilot did some work on the plane, taxied out to the runway, then "...he brought [the airplane] back and worked on it some more. After he worked on it a few minutes, he revved it up and it sounded real good. They got in the plane and I remember seeing [pilot] help fasten [passenger] in. I slammed the door shut on [passenger's] side and they took off."

Postaccident examination of the airframe and engine revealed no evidence of preimpact mechanical malfunction. Toxicological examination of specimens from both airplane occupants was conducted by the FAA Civil Aeromedical Institute (CAMI) in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, on July 30 1996 and September 5, 1996. The toxicological report for the pilot indicated 183.000 mg/dl of ethanol detected in the blood and 228.000 mg/dl of ethanol detected in the urine. The toxicological report for the passenger indicated 134.000 mg/dl of ethanol detected in the blood and 2.000 mg/dl of acetaldehyde detected in the blood.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	58,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:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Expired	Last FAA Medical Exam:	November 20, 1988
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	400 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N6303S
Model/Series:	150 150	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	15067103
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1600 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:		Engine Model/Series:	O-200-A
Registered Owner:	MICHAEL YEABOWER	Rated Power:	100 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:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	BLF ,2857 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	17 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	18:50 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	120°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 10000 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	10 knots / None	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	250°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	23°C / 9°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	(I25)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	15:50 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:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	37.36026,-81.10073(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Rayner, Brian
Additional Participating Persons:	PAUL REYNOLDS; CHARLESTON , WV
Original Publish Date:	February 3, 1998
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=28049

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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](#).