



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	ST. MARY'S, Georgia	Accident Number:	MIA97LA081
Date & Time:	February 2, 1997, 11:40 Local	Registration:	N6005J
Aircraft:	Cessna A150L	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot intended to photograph his son's house. He descended to an altitude of 1000 feet AGL, circled the house, and upon seeing people come out of the house and seeing them wave he took a couple of pictures. The pilot stated that he slowed the airplane down to 'flap operating speed...[and] put in 10 degrees of flap.' He then increased power, trimmed the airplane for level flight and 'essentially hands off' control. He stated that he circled twice, took two pictures, and 'then decided to drop...a tennis ball I had previously made up for the purpose...I tossed out the tennis ball. I then reached down for the camera in my lap and looked through the view finder, but was unable to frame the picture...I placed the camera back on my lap, and heard a cough/stutter from the engine and experienced a power loss...I employed carb (sic) heat and advanced the throttle...I seem to recall a slight forward movement when the power loss occurred and then I seem to recall sliding back away from the dash. Then I seem to have lost control. I remember trying to the keep the wings level and I watched the trees coming at me...' Ground witnesses saw the airplane maneuvering at a low altitude, turning, and going nose low into the trees. In addition, the witnesses told investigators that they heard the sound of the engine until impact. Examination of the engine and the airframe did not reveal any discrepancies.

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 airspeed which resulted in an inadvertent stall the at too low an altitude to allow recovery. A factor in this accident was the pilot's attention was diverted.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT

Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

Findings

1. (C) AIRSPEED - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) DIVERTED ATTENTION - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. STALL - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT

Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

Findings

4. OBJECT - TREE(S)

Factual Information

On February 2, 1997, about 1140 eastern standard time, a Cessna A150L, N6005J, registered to Atlantic Flying Club Inc., was substantially damaged while maneuvering, near St. Mary's, Georgia. The private-rated pilot received serious injuries and one passenger received minor injuries. Visual meteorological conditions (VMC) prevailed in the vicinity, and no flight plan had been filed. The local personal flight was being conducted in accordance with Title 14 CFR Part 91.

The pilot stated that he was intending to photograph his son's house. Before taking the photos he flew around the local area, did some touch-and-go landings at an airport, and then returned to his son's house to start taking photos.

According to the pilot he was within 2 miles of an airport, so he announced his intention over the airport's UNICOM frequency that he would be "within 2 miles of the airport...circling to take photographs." He descended to an altitude of "1000 feet AGL...and circled my sons house. Upon seeing people come out of the house and wave at us I decided to slow down and take a couple of pictures."

The pilot stated that he slowed the airplane down to "flap operating speed...[and] put in 10 degrees of flap." He then increased power, trimmed the airplane for level flight and "essentially hands off' control...[and] commenced a circle for pictures." He circled twice, took two pictures, and "then decided to drop...a tennis ball I had previously made up for the purpose...I tossed out the tennis ball. I then reached down for the camera in my lap and looked through the view finder, but was unable to frame the picture...I placed the camera back on my lap, and heard a cough/stutter from the engine and experienced a power loss...I employed carb (sic) heat and advanced the throttle...I seem to recall a slight forward movement when the power loss occurred and then I seem to recall sliding back away from the dash. Then I seem to have lost control. I remember trying to the keep the wings level and I watched the trees coming at me..."

Ground witnesses saw the airplane maneuvering at a low altitude, turning, and going nose low into the trees. In addition, the witnesses told investigators that they heard the sound of the engine until impact. Examination of the engine and the airframe did not reveal any discrepancies.

Pilot Information

Certificate:		Age:	56, Male
Airplane Rating(s):		Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):		Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):		Second Pilot Present:	
Instructor Rating(s):		Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Unknown Unknown	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:			

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N6005J
Model/Series:	A150L A150L	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Aerobatic	Serial Number:	0305
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	August 8, 1996 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1600 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	112 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	6425 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-200A
Registered Owner:	ATLANTIC FLYING CLUB INC.	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:	Not reported
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown	Visibility	
Lowest Ceiling:	Unknown	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:	
Departure Time:	00:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	

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 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Fire:	Unknown
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	Unknown
Total Injuries:	2 Serious	Latitude, Longitude:	30.750789,-81.569435(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Yurman, Alan
Additional Participating Persons:	CALVIN ROBINSON; ATLANTA , GA
Original Publish Date:	April 10, 1998
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=38219

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](#).