



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	ATLANTIC CITY, New Jersey	Accident Number:	NYC96FA027
Date & Time:	November 23, 1995, 16:15 Local	Registration:	N550RR
Aircraft:	Beech A36	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

Shortly after departure on runway 22, the pilot radioed the tower controller that he wanted to return due to an 'open door.' The controller cleared the pilot to land on any runway. According to the controller, the airplane climbed to an altitude of approximately 200 feet above the ground before leveling off. Witnesses watched the airplane turn left, commence a descent, and roll almost inverted before it impacted the ground. The first rescue personnel to arrive at the crash site said the right side cargo door was open. Examination of the exterior door handle 'D' ring on the forward door of the two aft cargo doors revealed that it was not latched completely, and the door was 'open' at the time of the accident. Examination of the door rods and latches revealed that all the rods were in place, and moved without restrictions when activated by hand. No discrepancies were observed with the door's latches or rods.

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 control of the airplane. A factor was the pilot's diverted attention due to an open aft cargo door.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING - TURN TO LANDING AREA (EMERGENCY)

Findings

1. (F) DOOR,CARGO/BAGGAGE - NOT ENGAGED
2. (F) AIRCRAFT PREFLIGHT - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) AIRCRAFT CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (F) DIVERTED ATTENTION - PILOT IN COMMAND

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

Factual Information

HISTORY OF FLIGHT

On November 23, 1995, about 1615 eastern standard time, a Beech A36, N550RR, collided with the ground while maneuvering at the Atlantic City International (ACY) Airport, Atlantic City, New Jersey. The airplane was destroyed. The private pilot was fatally injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and no flight plan had been filed. The personal flight to Houston, Texas, was being conducted under Title 14 CFR Part 91.

The airplane had landed at ACY at 1550, after a short flight from Bater Field, because there were no refueling services at Bater. The operations personnel at Midlantic Jet Aviation, Inc., the fixed base operator (FBO), stated that the pilot came inside the office, ordered fuel, and stated that he was in a hurry, because he was going to fly to Houston, Texas, that night. The airplane was refueled with 64 gallons of 100 low lead fuel, and the pilot entered his airplane and departed. According to the FBO's refueling invoice, the pilot had arrived at their facility at 1555.

At 1607, the pilot radioed Atlantic City ground control, and requested a VFR clearance from Atlantic City, New Jersey, to Washington, DC, then on to Knoxville, Tennessee, and then to Houston, Texas. The pilot was issued a departure clearance, and he taxied to the active runway. The flight was cleared for takeoff at 1614. The airplane departed on runway 22, and at 1614:45, the pilot advised the tower controller, "...I have to come back my ah door opened up." The controller cleared the pilot to land on any runway.

The controller was interviewed, and stated, she observed the airplane climbed to an altitude of approximately 200 feet above the ground, before leveling off. She watched the airplane turn left, commence a descent, and roll almost inverted, before she lost sight of it behind some buildings. At 1615:29, the sound of an emergency locator transmitter (ELT) was heard.

A security guard located near the flight line, witnessed the airplane flying over the Air National Guard area, and then lost sight of the airplane for a few seconds. The security guard stated the airplane, "...appeared to be in trouble." When the security guard next saw the airplane, it was over one of the buildings, and he stated, "...[the airplane] was inverted with the roof of the plane facing me and was still rolling." The security guard was the first on the scene of the crash and stated, "...I approached the scene...noticed fuel, and a door on the flight line side of the plane was open...a door on the right side of the airplane."

A fire fighter, employed by the Atlantic City Airport, Fire Department, stated in his summary report, "...regarding the status of the victim when first found in [the] aircraft, at no

time did I see a seat belt on the victim, remove a seat belt, or see anyone remove a seat belt." When rescue personnel arrived they found an open door on the airplane. According to the fire department report, "...in regards to the partially open door on the starboard side of the aircraft it was the door with the opening facing the aft of the aircraft and when I first arrived I pulled the door open to allow me to make entrance into the aircraft."

The accident occurred during the hours of daylight approximately 39 degrees, 27 minutes north, and 74 degrees, 34 minutes west.

PERSONNEL INFORMATION

Information on the pilot is contained in this report on page 3, under First Pilot Information. The pilot's personal logbook containing his flight hours was not found.

METEOROLOGICAL INFORMATION

Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the accident. Meteorological information is contained in this report on page 3, under Weather Information.

MEDICAL AND PATHOLOGICAL INFORMATION

An autopsy was performed on the pilot, on November 24, 1995, at the Shore Memorial Hospital, in Somers Point, New Jersey, by Dr. Lyla Perez.

Toxicological tests on pilot were conducted at the Toxicology Laboratory, Federal Aviation Administration, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and revealed "no drugs or alcohol."

WRECKAGE AND IMPACT INFORMATION

The airplane impacted in an area of the airport operated by the Air National Guard, and came to rest inverted, partially hanging over a cement embankment, approximately 1 mile south of the departure runway. All the parts of the airplane were found within the impact area. There were no ground scars observed, and no indication of any fore or aft movement, after impact. The wreckage was oriented on a heading of 225 degrees.

Both wings had remained attached to the fuselage, with the flaps and ailerons still attached. Both flaps were found in the retracted position. Both wings displayed crushing of the leading edges aft to the forward spar. The nose of the fuselage was crushed. The leading edge skin in the area of the fuel tanks, was peeled back to the forward spar, exposing the fuel bladder. Both tanks had been breached and no fuel was observed.

Examination of the empennage did not revealed any discrepancies, and all the control surfaces were attached to the main structure. The elevator trim tabs were found set at about 6 degrees tab up. Control continuity was established from the tail through the aft cabin.

The cabin area was exposed, and destroyed forward of the spar. All the instruments and switches were destroyed, rendering them either unreliable or unreadable. The aft cabin area displayed very little damage. The two aft cargo/utility doors were found attached to the fuselage, and according to the first rescue personnel to arrive at the crash site, the right side cargo door was "open." Examination of the "D" ring, exterior door handle, on the forward, of the 2 cargo doors, revealed it was in the "open" position. The handle was found stuck in a position oriented at 1:00 and 7:00 o'clock, which is not fully latched. The door is fully latched when the handle is at the 3:00 and 9:00 o'clock position. Examination of the door locking pins, revealed that the upper and lower pins did not engage the locking holes. The inner lining of the forward cargo door was removed to allow examination of the door rods and latches. All the rods were in place and moved with out restrictions when activated by hand. No discrepancies were observed with the door's latches or rods.

The right side, forward cabin door, displayed paint scraping from the periphery of the door frame, fore and aft crushing of the forward edge of the door, and the upper door latch was found in the latched position.

The landing gear and gear actuator were found in the retracted position. The fuel selector was selected to the "LEFT" tank position. The throttle, propeller and mixture controls were found in the full forward position.

The engine, with the propeller, had separated from the airframe. One propeller blade was bent opposite the direction of rotation, with cordwise scratches across the cambered side. The other blade was bent forward opposite the direction of rotation. An examination, and partial disassembly of the engine did not reveal any discrepancies.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The aircraft wreckage was released to Mr. Ken Crudent, airport operations, on November 24, 1995, and subsequently to the owner's insurance company.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	51, 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 Unknown	Last FAA Medical Exam:	November 15, 1995
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	525 hours (Total, all aircraft), 4 hours (Total, this make and model), 32 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Beech	Registration:	N550RR
Model/Series:	A36 A36	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	E822
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3600 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	IO-520-BA
Registered Owner:	ABI LIMON	Rated Power:	285 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:	ACY ,76 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	1 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	15:56 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	360°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 7000 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 11000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	4 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	240°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	7°C / 1°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	HOUSTON , TX (HOU)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	16:15 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	ATLANTIC CITY INTL ACY	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	76 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	22	IFR Approach:	
Runway Length/Width:	6144 ft / 150 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Forced 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:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Yurman, Alan
Additional Participating Persons:	JAMES L MAHIEU; PHILADELPHIA , PA
Original Publish Date:	December 16, 1996
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=39078

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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](#).