



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	ISLESBORO, Maine	Accident Number:	NYC96LA059
Date & Time:	February 5, 1996, 14:15 Local	Registration:	N6423X
Aircraft:	Cessna 180D	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot/owner stated that the preflight and engine run-up were normal, and he departed from runway 19 which is 2400 feet long. At approximately 500 feet above the ground, the airplane's engine began to run rough. The pilot reversed course to make a forced landing on runway 1 with a 10 knot tailwind. The engine subsequently lost complete power; however, a burst of power occurred afterwards. According to the pilot, the airplane overshot the runway. He avoided power lines, and then the aircraft 'mushed' into trees about 1/4 mile north of the runway. A witnesses observed black smoke coming from the engine during the airplane's return to the airport. Examination of the engine and the fuel system revealed no evidence of malfunction.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: a loss of engine power for an undetermined reason.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings

1. (C) REASON FOR OCCURRENCE UNDETERMINED

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING AFTER TAKEOFF

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING AFTER TAKEOFF

Findings
2. OBJECT - TREE(S)

Factual Information

On February 5, 1996, at 1415 eastern standard time, a Cessna 180D, N6423X, was substantially damaged during a forced landing after takeoff from the Islesboro Airport, Islesboro, Maine. The private pilot and passenger were not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed for the personnel flight that originated at Islesboro, at 1410. No flight plan had been filed for the flight conducted under 14 CFR Part 91.

In the NTSB Form 6120.1/2, the pilot stated that the pre-flight and engine run-up were normal. He departed from runway 19 at the Islesboro Airport (57B), and at approximately 500 feet above the ground, the airplane's engine began to run rough. The pilot initiated a right turn back to the airport, and the engine continued to run rough while the airplane climbed to 800 feet. This was followed by a complete loss of engine power as the airplane was approaching runway 01.

The pilot further stated:

"...Intersected runway at 45 degree, descending, no power, with tailwind of 10 knots. Very difficult...to make left turn northbound to rwy 1. Nearly hit tree tops on east side of runway, was just regaining control...when engine gave an unexpected burst of power. This changed my mind to think of flying out to the water and landing on the frozen...bay...but power lasted perhaps 4 seconds, enough to gain 50 feet of altitude so that we were able to miss several power lines and fly, mush, into the tops of a stand of [trees]..."

The airplane then collided with trees about 1/4 mile north of the runway.

According to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Inspector's report, a witnesses observed black smoke coming from the engine during the airplane's return to the airport. Examination of the engine and the fuel system revealed, "...No direct evidence to establish the reason for the engine exhausting black smoke during this event..."

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	56, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	May 25, 1995
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	790 hours (Total, all aircraft), 426 hours (Total, this make and model), 621 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 15 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N6423X
Model/Series:	180D 180D	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	18050923
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	October 27, 1995 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2650 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	15 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	1791 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	O-470R-6
Registered Owner:	JOHN HIGGINSON	Rated Power:	230 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:	RKD ,56 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	19 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	14:15 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	210°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	9 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	210°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	-10°C / -18°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	(57B)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	14:10 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	ISLEBORO 57B	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	92 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	1	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	2400 ft / 50 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Forced landing

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 None	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Pearce, Robert
Additional Participating Persons:	ROBERT D BURRELL; PORTLAND , ME
Original Publish Date:	August 20, 1996
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=39147

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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](#).