Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	BURSON, California	**Accident Number:**	LAX99LA076
Date & Time:	January 17, 1999, 12:45 Local	**Registration:**	N89513
Aircraft:	Cessna 140	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Defining Event:		**Injuries:**	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot stated that during cruise the aircraft experienced a loss of engine power and made a successful forced landing in a dirt field. After landing, he examined the aircraft, found no problems, restarted the engine and conducted a run-up without discrepancies. He took off and was approximately 50 feet agl when he saw a power line directly ahead and made a steep left turn to avoid the wires. He said that the aircraft stalled during the turn and impacted the terrain. The aircraft and fuel were examined on scene with no discrepancies noted.

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 adequate airspeed while maneuvering to avoid an obstacle immediately after takeoff. A factor in the accident was the pilot's inadequate examination of the off-airport takeoff area in order to identify potential hazards.

Findings

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

Findings
1. OBJECT - WIRE,TRANSMISSION
2. (F) UNSAFE/HAZARDOUS CONDITION - NOT IDENTIFIED - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. MANEUVER TO AVOID OBSTRUCTIONS - ATTEMPTED - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (C) AIRSPEED(VS) - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

5. STALL/MUSH - ENCOUNTERED - PILOT IN COMMAND

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

Findings
6. TERRAIN CONDITION - OPEN FIELD

Factual Information

On January 17, 1999, at 1245 hours Pacific standard time, a Cessna 140, N89513, collided with the ground during takeoff from a dirt field, near Burson, California. Visual meteorological conditions existed and no flight plan was filed. The aircraft was substantially damaged. The private pilot was not injured. The aircraft was owned and operated by the pilot under 14 CFR Part 91.

In his written statement to the Safety Board, the pilot reported that he was at slow flight with 1500 rpm's and the carburetor heat on at 1,500 feet above ground level (agl). He stated that he experienced "carb ice, engine died." The pilot reported that he shut the engine down and picked a field for a forced landing. After landing in the field he restarted the engine, checked it's operating perimeters with no mechanical malfunctions noted. The pilot reported that he then took off from the field and approximately 50 feet agl he saw power lines, made a steep left turn to avoid them, and stalled the aircraft.

In the pilot's initial statement to the Calaveras County Sheriff's Department he reported that he had been circling a friend's house when the engine quit. He stated that he thought he had run out of fuel in one tank and didn't have time to switch tanks, so he landed in the field. After landing and examining the aircraft, he restarted the engine and took off. The pilot reported that after takeoff, at 50 feet agl, he saw power lines. The pilot stated that he banked to the left, at which point the aircraft "fell out of the air to the ground."

On January 27, 1999, the pilot filed an amended statement to the Calaveras County Sheriff's Department. In his amended statement, the pilot said that he "had carburetor ice." The pilot reported that he attempted an unsuccessful restart of the engine and made a forced landing in the dirt field. The balance of the statement remained unchanged from the initial statement.

In an interview with a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) inspector, the pilot reported that he had experienced an in-flight loss of engine power and he made a forced landing on the dirt field. Afterward, he restarted the engine by switching the fuel selector tank position, conducted an engine run-up with no abnormalities noted, and initiated the takeoff.

Aircraft recovery personnel were asked to document the fuel onboard the aircraft for quantity, grade, contamination, and system flow to the carburetor. The recovery personnel noted that there were approximately 6 1/2 gallons of fuel recovered, 4 gallons in the left tank and 2 1/2 gallons in the right tank. The fuel was blue in color and smelled like aviation fuel. No contamination of the fuel was noted. The recovery personnel further reported that there were no discrepancies noted with the fuel flow between the tanks and the carburetor.

Weather information was obtained from the Stockton, California, airport, approximately 32 nmi

west of the accident site. The temperature reported at the time of the accident was 64 degrees Fahrenheit and the dew point was reported as 50 degrees Fahrenheit. According to the icing probability chart (appended to file), the conditions were conducive to moderate icing during cruise.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	**Age:**	70,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--no waivers/lim.	**Last FAA Medical Exam:**	September 19, 1998
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	**Last Flight Review or Equivalent:**	
Flight Time:	529 hours (Total, all aircraft), 29 hours (Total, this make and model), 529 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	**Registration:**	N89513
Model/Series:	140 140	**Aircraft Category:**	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		**Amateur Built:**	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	**Serial Number:**	8546
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	**Seats:**	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	July 13, 1998 Annual	**Certified Max Gross Wt.:**	1450 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	35 Hrs	**Engines:**	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	2635 Hrs	**Engine Manufacturer:**	Continental
ELT:	Installed	**Engine Model/Series:**	O-200
Registered Owner:	LEE CHAVEZ	**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:**	Dawn
Observation Facility, Elevation:	SCK ,30 ft msl	**Distance from Accident Site:**	32 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	12:56 Local	**Direction from Accident Site:**	260°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 4500 ft AGL	**Visibility**	9 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	**Visibility (RVR):**	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	11 knots /	**Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:**	/
Wind Direction:	160°	**Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:**	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	**Temperature/Dew Point:**	18°C / 10°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	, CA (0O3)	**Type of Flight Plan Filed:**	None
Destination:		**Type of Clearance:**	None
Departure Time:	00:00 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 None	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		**Aircraft Fire:**	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	**Aircraft Explosion:**	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	**Latitude, Longitude:**	38.199325,-120.889236(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Cornejo, Tealeye
Additional Participating Persons:	GARY JUSTICE; SACRAMENTO , CA
Original Publish Date:	June 22, 2000
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=45667