



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	MOAB, Utah	Accident Number:	DEN00LA103
Date & Time:	June 6, 2000, 08:00 Local	Registration:	N185RL
Aircraft:	Cessna 185B	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	3 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot said that as the airplane lifted off, he smelled smoke and the engine began losing power. He said that he still had runway under him, so he landed the airplane. The airplane continued beyond the runway approximately 100 to 200 feet, and came to rest in tall grass. The pilot said that flames immediately erupted from the left side of the engine compartment. He said that flames 'completely engulfed the airplane within 30 seconds.' The salvage man that recovered the airplane reported that the fire had been so intense that 'everything in the engine compartment area had melted/burned away except for steel components.'

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The fire in the engine compartment for unknown reason.

Findings

Occurrence #1: FIRE
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings
1. ENGINE COMPARTMENT - FIRE
2. (C) REASON FOR OCCURRENCE UNDETERMINED

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY DESCENT/LANDING

Factual Information

On June 6, 2000, approximately 0800 mountain daylight time, a Cessna 185B, N185RL, was destroyed by fire following a forced landing at Mineral Canyon Airfield near Moab, Utah. The commercial pilot and his two passengers were not injured. The airplane was being operated by the pilot under Title 14 CFR Part 91. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed for the cross-country flight that was originating at the time of the accident. No flight plan had been filed.

The pilot said that as the airplane lifted off, he smelled smoke and the engine began losing power. There was still runway ahead, so he landed the airplane. The airplane went off the end of the runway and traveled approximately 100 to 200 feet in tall grass. The pilot said that flames immediately erupted from the left side of the engine compartment, and "completely engulfed the airplane within 30 seconds."

Salvage personnel who recovered the airplane reported that the fire had been so intense that "everything in the engine compartment area had melted/burned away except for steel components."

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	34, 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--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	July 2, 1998
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	880 hours (Total, all aircraft), 400 hours (Total, this make and model), 851 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 79 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 33 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N185RL
Model/Series:	185B 185B	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	1850529
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	January 14, 2000 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3200 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	IO-520D
Registered Owner:	SCOTT E. CHEW	Rated Power:	300 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:	CNY ,4553 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	40 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	07:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	130°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	9 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	130°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	26°C / 3°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	(NONE)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	MOAB , UT (CNY)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	08:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	MINERAL CANYON NONE	Runway Surface Type:	Grass/turf
Airport Elevation:	3900 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	18	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	2100 ft / 100 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Forced landing;Full stop

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	2 None	Aircraft Fire:	On-ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 None	Latitude, Longitude:	38.530174,-109.549743(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Struhsaker, James
Additional Participating Persons:	TOM DUFRESNE; SALT LAKE CITY , UT
Original Publish Date:	March 2, 2001
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	The NTSB traveled to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=49371

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](#).