



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	CHATSWORTH, Georgia	Accident Number:	ATL00LA078
Date & Time:	August 4, 2000, 19:43 Local	Registration:	UNREG
Aircraft:	Solo Wings AQUILLA	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Fatal, 1 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The airplane collided with trees as the non-certificated pilot maneuvered the unregistered airplane over a residential area. In accordance with Federal Aviation Regulation Part 103, the accident airplane was to be used for flight instruction only. Family members reported that the pilot and his passenger routinely flew the accident airplane in the community. The limited examination the airplane failed to disclose a mechanical malfunction or component failure.

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 clearance from trees while maneuvering that resulted in the collision with trees and the ground.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

Findings

1. OBJECT - TREE(S)
2. (C) MISCELLANEOUS - UNQUALIFIED PERSON
3. (C) LACK OF CERTIFICATION - UNQUALIFIED PERSON
4. (C) CLEARANCE - NOT MAINTAINED - UNQUALIFIED PERSON

Factual Information

On August 4, 2000, at 1943 eastern daylight time, an unregistered experimental airplane was substantially damaged when it collided with the ground while maneuvering near Chatsworth, Georgia. The non-certificated pilot was fatally injured and the passenger was seriously injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the accident. The local personal flight was conducted under the provisions of Title 14 CFR Part 91 with no flight plan on file. The flight originated from a private field near Chatsworth, Georgia, at an undetermined time.

According to witnesses and family members in the immediate vicinity of the accident site, the experimental airplane was circling over the neighborhood. Witnesses then stated that the engine started to speed up, followed by a decrease in speed. The experimental airplane then made a tight descending turn, followed by an increase in engine speed. The airplane then collided with trees, and subsequently came to rest in the intersection of two roads in the community.

According to Federal Aviation Regulation Part 103, the accident airplane was to be used for flight instruction only. There were no records of the owner/ operator of the accident airplane receiving flight instruction in the Solo Wings Aquilla airplane. Further examination revealed that the pilot had no record of being registered in the Ultra-Light Airman's Registration Program. Family members reported that the pilot and his passenger routinely flew the accident airplane over their community. Weather conditions at the time of the accident were favorable for icing conditions. The limited examination of the airframe and the sub-systems failed to disclose a mechanical malfunction or component failure.

On August 5, 2000, the postmortem examination on the pilot was conducted by Dr. Cameron Snider at the office of the Medical Examiner in Chatsworth, Georgia. The toxicological examination was negative for alcohol and drugs.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	None	Age:	35, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	None Unknown	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:			

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Solo Wings	Registration:	UNREG
Model/Series:	AQUILLA AQUILLA	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental (Special)	Serial Number:	
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	326 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	Rotax
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	M517610
Registered Owner:	CURTIS RODGERS	Rated Power:	
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:	DNN ,710 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:	19:40 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	4 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	350°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	29°C / 22°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:		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:	
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal, 1 Serious	Latitude, Longitude:	34.769836,-84.769515(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Powell, Phillip
Additional Participating Persons:	JAMES N JONES; COLLEGE PARK , GA
Original Publish Date:	July 17, 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=50021

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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](#).