



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Forrest City, Arkansas	Accident Number:	FTW02LA109
Date & Time:	March 24, 2002, 06:20 Local	Registration:	N9454J
Aircraft:	Cessna 188	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 137: Agricultural		

Analysis

On the first load of the day, the pilot circled the field to check for obstructions. After several spray passes, the pilot came to a small triangle area of the field, which he entered from south to north. Wires bordered the north end of the field. As he started to climb out of the field over a set of wires, the pilot reported that "I felt like I wasn't going to clear the wires." As he pushed the airplane's nose down to go under the wires, the right wheel clipped the top of a pole, and the top of the tail struck the bottom set of wires. After the pilot exited the field, another pilot in the area surveyed the airplane and reported the right wheel was "angled in slightly." Determining all controls were working properly, the pilot dispensed the remainder of his load, then proceeded to an alternate airport. Upon landing, the right main landing gear collapsed, the pilot lost directional control, and the airplane exited the runway and came to a stop. When the pilot got out of the airplane he found that the top portion of the rudder had been severed by the wire strike.

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 with a light pole and power lines during an aerial application flight.

Findings

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

Findings

1. (C) CLEARANCE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. OBJECT - WIRE, TRANSMISSION
3. OBJECT - POLE

Occurrence #2: LOSS OF CONTROL - ON GROUND/WATER
Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

Findings

4. DIRECTIONAL CONTROL - NOT POSSIBLE - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

On March 24, 2002, approximately 0620 central standard time, a Cessna 188 agricultural airplane, N9454J, sustained substantial damage when it impacted a light pole and a power line near Forrest City, Arkansas. The commercial pilot, sole occupant of the airplane, was not injured. The airplane was registered to and operated by Hutcherson Flying Service, Forrest City, Arkansas. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed for the 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 137 local aerial application flight, and a flight plan was not filed. The flight originated at 0605.

According to the Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident Report (NTSB Form 6120.1/2), and in a telephone interview conducted by the NTSB investigator-in-charge, the pilot reported that this was the first load of the day. After circling the field to look for obstructions, the pilot began spraying, eventually reaching "a small triangle end of the field" with wires running from east to west. The wires bordered the north end of the field. The pilot stated that he began his spray pass from south to north, and "as I started to climb, I felt like I wasn't going to clear the wires." As he pushed the airplane's nose down to go under the wires, he felt the right wheel impact the top of a pole, as well as the top of the tail clip the bottom wire.

After climbing out of the field, another pilot in the area surveyed the airplane and reported that the right main landing gear was angled slightly inwards. The pilot determined that all of the flight controls operated properly, and he elected to dispense the remainder of the load. The pilot then proceeded to the Thompson-Robbins Airport, West Helena, Arkansas, and landed. During the touchdown, the right main landing gear folded inward and upward under the engine cowling. Subsequently, the pilot lost directional control of the airplane and it exited the runway surface, coming to rest upright. The pilot then exited the airplane and noted that the top 8 to 12 inches of the top of the rudder had been severed.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	33, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Single
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 2 Valid Medical—no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	July 3, 2001
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	October 25, 2001
Flight Time:	400 hours (Total, all aircraft), 70 hours (Total, this make and model), 337 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 75 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 55 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 11 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N9454J
Model/Series:	188	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Restricted (Special)	Serial Number:	T18803808T
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	1
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	January 7, 2002 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	4000 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	90 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	7143 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	TSIO-520-T
Registered Owner:	Hutcherson Flying Service	Rated Power:	300 Horsepower
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	UTC

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:		Visibility	15 miles
Lowest Ceiling:		Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	7 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	180°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	13°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Forrest City, AR (FCY)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	06:05 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	Thompson-Robbins HEE	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	242 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	17	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	5000 ft / 96 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Precautionary landing

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:	35.036666,-90.909446

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Little, Thomas
Additional Participating Persons:	Wilbur D Keith; Federal Aviation Administration; Little Rock, AR
Original Publish Date:	August 26, 2002
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=54442

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](#).