



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Galena, Alaska	Accident Number:	ANC03LA031
Date & Time:	March 9, 2003, 09:30 Local	Registration:	N1613M
Aircraft:	Cessna 185	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	3 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The commercial pilot reported that following an intersection departure, the airplane stopped climbing when it was about 50 feet above the runway. He said that the airplane's engine appeared to be producing full power, but the airplane still would not climb. As the airplane neared the end of the runway, the pilot closed the engine throttle in an effort to abort the takeoff, and land on the remaining runway. The airplane descended, and as the airplane's main landing gear struck the surface of the runway, the left main landing gear collapsed. The airplane's left wing struck the runway, and the airplane veered off the left side of the runway, into an area of snow-covered terrain. The airplane sustained substantial damage to the fuselage and left wing. An FAA aviation safety inspector examined the airplane, and reported that no airframe or engine preaccident mechanical anomalies were discovered. The inspector reported that the propeller assembly had been removed prior to his arrival. Under the direction of the NTSB IIC, the propeller assembly was disassembled and inspected. No preimpact mechanical anomalies were noted during the examination.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The failure of the airplane to climb after takeoff which resulted in an in-flight collision with terrain during an aborted landing attempt.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - ABORTED

Findings

1. (C) CLIMB - NOT POSSIBLE
2. TERRAIN CONDITION - RUNWAY

Factual Information

On March 9, 2003, about 0930 Alaska daylight time, a wheel/ski-equipped Cessna 185 airplane, N1613M, sustained substantial damage when it collided with terrain during an aborted takeoff from the Galena Airport, Galena, Alaska. The airplane was being operated as a visual flight rules (VFR) personal flight under Title 14, CFR Part 91, when the accident occurred. The flight was being conducted in support of the Iditarod Trail dog sled race. The certificated commercial pilot and the two passengers were not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and a VFR flight plan had been filed. The flight originated at the Galena Airport, and was en route to Unalakleet, Alaska.

During a telephone conversation with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigator-in-charge (IIC) on March 9, the pilot reported that following an intersection departure from runway 07, the airplane stopped climbing when it was about 50 feet above the runway. The pilot added that the airplane's engine appeared to be producing full power, but the airplane still would not climb. He said that as the airplane neared the end of the runway, he closed the engine throttle in an effort to abort the takeoff, and land on the remaining runway. The airplane descended, and as the airplane's main landing gear struck the surface of the runway, the left main landing gear collapsed. The airplane's left wing struck the runway, and the airplane ultimately veered off the left side of the runway, into an area of snow-covered terrain. The airplane sustained substantial damage to the fuselage and left wing.

The airplane was retrieved from the accident airport and transported to a maintenance facility located in Big Lake, Alaska. On May 29, a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) airworthiness inspector of the Anchorage Flight Standards District Office, inspected the airplane. The inspector reported that no airframe or engine preaccident mechanical anomalies were noted. The inspector reported that the propeller assembly had been removed prior to his arrival.

On June 17, a propeller tear down and inspection was conducted at Dominion Propeller Corporation, Anchorage, Alaska. While under the direction of the NTSB IIC, the propeller assembly was disassembled and inspected. No preimpact mechanical anomalies were discovered during the examination.

The Safety Board released the propeller assembly to the owner's representative on June 17, 2003. No other components were retained by the Safety Board.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	63, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea	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:	August 22, 2002
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	November 28, 2001
Flight Time:	2457 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1142 hours (Total, this make and model), 2332 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 27 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 27 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 6 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N1613M
Model/Series:	185	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	018501833
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel; Ski/wheel	Seats:	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	June 28, 2002 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3350 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	60 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	2270 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	IO-520-D
Registered Owner:	Roger R. Sires	Rated Power:	300 Horsepower
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

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:	Clear	Visibility	50 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	-12°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Galena , AK (PAGA)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	VFR
Destination:	Unalakleet , AK (PAUN)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	09:30 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class C

Airport Information

Airport:	Galena PAGA	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	152 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Snow
Runway Used:	06	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	7254 ft / 150 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	2 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 None	Latitude, Longitude:	64.733329,-156.933334

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Johnson, Clinton
Additional Participating Persons:	David Karalunas; Federal Aviation Administration; Fairbanks , AK
Original Publish Date:	November 25, 2003
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=56611

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](#).