



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Fabens, Texas	Accident Number:	FTW03LA152
Date & Time:	May 16, 2003, 16:30 Local	Registration:	N478RD
Aircraft:	Cessna A188B	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The tailwheel-equipped airplane drifted off the right side of the 4,200 feet long, 60 feet wide asphalt runway during the landing roll. The 1,100-hour pilot attempted to go around. During the attempt to go around, the airplane struck the top of a sand dune with the main landing gear. The pilot attempted to avoid a hill directly in front of him and attempted to turn the airplane to the left. Subsequently, the airplane struck a second sand dune with the main landing gear and tailwheel and landed hard coming to rest upright. The pilot reported the wind was from approximately 340 degrees at 5 knots at the time of the accident.

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 terrain clearance. The pilot's attempt to avoid an obstacle was a contributing factor.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: GO-AROUND (VFR)

Findings

1. CLEARANCE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) MANEUVER TO AVOID OBSTRUCTIONS - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. TERRAIN CONDITION - SAND BAR



Factual Information

On May 16, 2003, at 1630 mountain daylight time, a Cessna A188B tailwheel-equipped agricultural airplane, N478RD, registered to and operated by C&D Aerial Applications of Clint, Texas, sustained substantial damage during landing roll following a loss of directional control at Fabens Airport (E35), Fabens, Texas. The commercial pilot, who was the sole occupant of the airplane, was not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and a flight plan was not filed for the 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91 personal flight. The local flight departed from E35 at 1430.

The 1,100-hour pilot reported in the Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident Report (NTSB Form 6120.1/2) that he was on final approach for runway 26, a 4,200 foot long, 60 foot wide asphalt runway, with two notches of flaps set. While on final, he noted a slight right crosswind was present. At approximately 70 knots, the airplane set down on the runway with its main landing gears. As the airplane started to slow and the tail of the airplane started to settle at approximately 60 knots, "a sudden abrupt drift to the right was experienced." He then made control movements as the "drift became more abrupt." The pilot stated, as the edge of the runway was eminent, full power was applied for "go-around procedures" and before he could remove one notch of flaps, the airplanes main landing gear struck a sand dune.

The pilot further stated that he attempted to turn the airplane to the left and avoid a hill directly in front of him. He made control movements, and reduced the power to idle. Nearing a second sand dune, he added full power and back pressure on the control stick "to keep a nose high attitude on impact." Subsequently, the airplane impacted the sand dune with the main landing gear and tailwheel. The airplane started "fish hooking" to the right coming to rest upright.

The FAA inspector, who responded to the accident site, reported that the right main landing gear was sheared off. The right wing was bent and partially separated from the fuselage. The right horizontal stabilizer and elevator were partially separated and bent.

El Paso International Airport (ELP), near El Paso, Texas, located 21 miles north of the accident site was the nearest weather reporting station. At 1651, ELP was reporting wind from 280 degrees at 9 knots, few clouds at 9,000 msl, with a visibility of 10 statute miles. The temperature was 33 degrees Celsius, and the dew point was 2 degree Celsius.

The pilot reported that the wind was from 340 degrees, at approximately 5 knots at the time of the accident.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	35, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Center
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:	October 31, 2002
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	April 11, 2003
Flight Time:	1100 hours (Total, all aircraft), 200 hours (Total, this make and model), 980 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 350 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 100 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N478RD
Model/Series:	A188B	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Restricted (Special)	Serial Number:	18802609
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	1
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	May 5, 2003 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	4200 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	10 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	6766.8 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	IO-520-D
Registered Owner:	David Armstrong	Rated Power:	300 Horsepower
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	
Operator Does Business As:	C&D Aerial Applications	Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	ELP,3958 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	21 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	16:51 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	315°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 9000 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	9 knots / 0 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	280°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.03 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	33°C / 2°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	FABENS, TX (E35)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	FABENS, TX (E35)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	14:30 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	FABENS E35	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	3679 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	26	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	4200 ft / 60 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Full stop;Straight-in

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:	31.515556,-106.146942

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Lemishko, Alexander
Additional Participating Persons:	Bryan D Hanson; FAA Flight Standards; Albuquerque, NM
Original Publish Date:	December 30, 2003
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=57000

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](#).