



AVIATION



HIGHWAY



MARINE



RAILROAD



PIPELINE

Aviation Investigation Final Report

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| Location: | East Brady, Pennsylvania | Accident Number: | NYC03CA152 |
| Date & Time: | July 6, 2003, 10:39 Local | Registration: | N70LB |
| Aircraft: | Maule MX-7-235 | Aircraft Damage: | Substantial |
| Defining Event: | | Injuries: | 1 Minor |
| Flight Conducted Under: | Part 91: General aviation - Personal | | |

Analysis

The pilot set up for a river landing by first circling the touchdown zone twice to check for obstacles, and waiting for boat traffic to clear. The pilot maintained an airspeed of about 75 knots during the approach, and slowed to an estimated 60 knots just above the water. During the touchdown, the airplane bounced, and the pilot added power to cushion the landing. The airplane touched down on the water on its left float, bounced onto its right float, then again on its left float. During the last bounce, the left strut impacted the fuselage, and the airplane came to rest on the shore of the river. Examination of the airplane by a Federal Aviation Administration inspector revealed substantial damage to both pontoons, both wings, the engine cowlings, and the propeller. No mechanical anomalies were noted with the airplane.

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 control of the airplane during landing.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

1. (C) AIRCRAFT CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: ON GROUND/WATER ENCOUNTER WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

2. TERRAIN CONDITION - DIRT BANK/RISING EMBANKMENT

Factual Information

On July 6, 2003, at 1039 eastern daylight time, a Maule MX-7-235 amphibian, N70LB, was substantially damaged while landing on the Allegheny River, in East Brady, Pennsylvania. The certificated private pilot received minor injuries. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and no flight plan was filed for the personal flight which originated at Butler County Airport (BTP), Butler, Pennsylvania, and was conducted under 14 CFR Part 91.

According to the pilot, he set up for the river landing by first circling the touchdown zone twice to check for obstacles, and waiting for boat traffic to clear. He maintained an airspeed of about 75 knots during the approach, and slowed to an estimated 60 knots just above the water. During the touchdown, the airplane bounced, and the pilot added power to cushion the landing. The airplane touched down on the water on its left float, bounced onto its right float, and then again on its left float. During the last bounce, the left strut impacted the fuselage, and the airplane came to rest on the shore of the river.

The pilot reported 651 hours of total flight experience, 30 of which were in make and model.

Examination of the airplane by a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) inspector revealed substantial damage to both pontoons, both wings, the engine cowling, and the propeller. No mechanical anomalies were noted with the airplane.

Weather reported at the Venango Regional Airport (FKL), Franklin, Pennsylvania, 25 miles northeast of the accident site, at 1035, included calm winds and unlimited visibility.

Pilot Information

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|----------------------------------|--|--|-----------------|
| Certificate: | Private | Age: | 51, 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 10, 2001 |
| Occupational Pilot: | UNK | Last Flight Review or Equivalent: | |
| Flight Time: | 651 hours (Total, all aircraft), 30 hours (Total, this make and model) | | |

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

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|--------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Aircraft Make: | Maule | Registration: | N70LB |
| Model/Series: | MX-7-235 | Aircraft Category: | Airplane |
| Year of Manufacture: | | Amateur Built: | |
| Airworthiness Certificate: | Normal | Serial Number: | 10010C |
| Landing Gear Type: | Amphibian | Seats: | |
| Date/Type of Last Inspection: | | Certified Max Gross Wt.: | 2750 lbs |
| Time Since Last Inspection: | | Engines: | 1 Reciprocating |
| Airframe Total Time: | | Engine Manufacturer: | Lycoming |
| ELT: | | Engine Model/Series: | O-540 |
| Registered Owner: | Stephen Grabowski | Rated Power: | |
| Operator: | | Operating Certificate(s) Held: | None |

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

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|---|-----------------------|---|---------|
| 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 | |
| Lowest Ceiling: | | Visibility (RVR): | |
| Wind Speed/Gusts: | / | Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Wind Direction: | | Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Altimeter Setting: | | Temperature/Dew Point: | |
| Precipitation and Obscuration: | | | |
| Departure Point: | Butler, PA (BTP) | Type of Flight Plan Filed: | None |
| Destination: | East Brady, PA (NONE) | Type of Clearance: | None |
| Departure Time: | | Type of Airspace: | Class G |

Wreckage and Impact Information

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|----------------------------|---------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| Crew Injuries: | 1 Minor | Aircraft Damage: | Substantial |
| Passenger Injuries: | | Aircraft Fire: | None |
| Ground Injuries: | N/A | Aircraft Explosion: | None |
| Total Injuries: | 1 Minor | Latitude, Longitude: | 41.166667,-80.133331 |

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Andrews, Jill

Additional Participating Persons:

Original Publish Date: March 2, 2004

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note: This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=57388>

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](#).