



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	Oakland, Maryland	<b>Accident Number:</b>	IAD05LA055
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	April 14, 2005, 07:20 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N53548
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Cessna 337G	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	2 Serious
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Positioning		

## Analysis

While on a straight-in visual approach to an non-towered airport, the pilot reduced power and adjusted the flaps to "approach" for the descent; "but we just didn't seem to be dropping like we should." The pilot increased the flap setting and reduced the engine power further, but the approach still appeared "high." Over the runway threshold, the airplane was "a little high, and a little fast", and touched down about halfway down the runway. The pilot determined that the airplane would not stop on the remaining runway, and aborted the landing. The airplane continued off the end of the runway and collided with trees and terrain. The pilot failed to tune the radio to the correct frequency, was unable to obtain the current weather conditions at the airport, and touched down with a direct tailwind of about 8 knots. When asked about the handling characteristics and the performance of the airplane, he said, "It was performing perfectly," and further described the landing as a "bad decision."

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's delay in aborting the landing, which resulted in an inadvertent stall/mush into the trees. A factor in the accident was the tailwind.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT  
Phase of Operation: LANDING - ABORTED

Findings

1. (C) ABORTED LANDING - DELAYED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. AIRSPEED - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - TAILWIND
4. STALL/MUSH - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND

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Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT  
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Findings

5. OBJECT - TREE(S)

## Factual Information

On April 14, 2005, about 0720 eastern daylight time, a Cessna 337G, N53548, was destroyed when it collided with trees and caught fire following an aborted landing at the Garrett County Airport (2G4), Oakland, Maryland. The certificated private pilot and passenger were seriously injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed for the positioning flight that departed the Greater Cumberland Regional Airport (CBE), Cumberland, Maryland, about 0700. No flight plan was filed for the flight conducted under 14 CFR Part 91.

According to the pilot, the purpose of the flight was to position the airplane at the Garrett County Airport prior to commencing aerial survey flights of the area. When the pilot departed Cumberland, the winds were "calm", and he climbed to 5,000 feet for the en route portion of the 27-mile flight.

Runway 26 at Garrett County Airport was 3,001 feet long, and sat on top of a hill at 2,933 feet elevation. Trees surrounded the airport, and the terrain sloped away from the runway at the departure end of runway 26. The runway, and the treetops at the west end of the airport, were at the same approximate elevation.

As the airplane approached the Garrett County Airport, the pilot announced his intention to perform a straight in approach to runway 26 over the radio, but received no response. The pilot reduced power and adjusted the flaps to approach for the descent, "but we just didn't seem to be dropping like we should." The pilot increased the flap setting and reduced the engine power further, but the approach still appeared "high."

Over the runway threshold, the airplane was "a little high, and a little fast", and touched down about halfway down the runway. The pilot determined that the airplane would not stop on the remaining runway, and aborted the landing.

The pilot added power, the airplane lifted from the runway, and the pilot "held the nose down" in an attempt to gain airspeed. The airplane continued off the end of the runway, and descended toward the trees. The pilot "pulled the nose up," but the airplane collided with trees and terrain.

The airplane was examined at the site by a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) aviation safety inspector on the day of the accident. The first tree strike was about 300 feet beyond the departure end of runway 26. The wreckage path was oriented 260 degrees, and continued about 150 feet to the main wreckage. The right wing was separated from the airplane, and came to rest 25 feet beyond the first tree strike. The main wreckage, which included the left wing, was consumed by fire. Several pieces of angularly cut wood were found along the wreckage path. The wood pieces were cut cleanly, at sharp angles, with the exposed wood

burned by fire.

One tree along the wreckage path was severed completely, and the trunk was sliced cleanly at a sharp angle.

The pilot held a private pilot certificate with ratings for airplane single engine, multi-engine land, and instrument airplane. He was issued an FAA second-class medical certificate on December 15, 2004.

The pilot reported approximately 1,500 hours of total flight experience, 1,100 hours of which were in multi-engine airplanes, and 900 hours of which were in make and model.

At 0745, the weather reported at Garrett County Airport included clear skies with wind from 080 degrees at 8 knots.

During the interview, the pilot said that during the flight, his communication radio remained tuned to the Cumberland Regional Airport UNICOM frequency of 122.8. He failed to tune the radio to the Garrett County Airport UNICOM frequency of 123.0, and was not advised of the wind and landing direction. The pilot stated that he landed with a direct tailwind of 8 knots.

When asked about the handling characteristics and the performance of the airplane, he said, "It was performing perfectly," and further described the landing as a "bad decision."

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Private	<b>Age:</b>	51, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 2 None	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	December 1, 2004
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	Yes	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	1500 hours (Total, all aircraft), 900 hours (Total, this make and model)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Cessna	<b>Registration:</b>	N53548
<b>Model/Series:</b>	337G	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal; Limited (Special)	<b>Serial Number:</b>	33701692
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Retractable - Tricycle	<b>Seats:</b>	2
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	November 1, 2004 Annual	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	4630 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	100 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	2 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	4000 Hrs at time of accident	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Continental
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed, not activated	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	IO-360-G
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	Laser Mapping Specialists, Inc	<b>Rated Power:</b>	210 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>		<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual (VMC)	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	2G4,2933 ft msl	<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	1 Nautical Miles
<b>Observation Time:</b>	07:45 Local	<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	260°
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Clear	<b>Visibility</b>	10 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	8 knots /	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	80°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	29.97 inches Hg	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	3°C / -7°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	CUMBERLAND, MD (CBE )	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>	Oakland, MD (2G4 )	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	07:00 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>	Garrett County Airport 2G4	<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>		<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	
<b>Runway Used:</b>		<b>IFR Approach:</b>	
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>		<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 Serious	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	1 Serious	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	On-ground
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	2 Serious	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	39.577499,-79.339164

## Administrative Information

**Investigator In Charge (IIC):** Rayner, Brian

**Additional Participating Persons:** Anthony Serio; FAA; Baltimore, MD

**Original Publish Date:** January 31, 2006

**Last Revision Date:**

**Investigation Class:** [Class](#)

**Note:**

**Investigation Docket:** <https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=61303>

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