Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Placitas, New Mexico	**Accident Number:**	DEN07FA100
Date & Time:	June 16, 2007, 16:10 Local	**Registration:**	N6750R
Aircraft:	Beech 58	**Aircraft Damage:**	Destroyed
Defining Event:		**Injuries:**	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

Approximately three and one half hours into the cross country flight, the airplane impacted mountainous terrain during daylight hours in visual meteorological conditions. No pre-impact engine or airframe anomalies, that would preclude normal operation prior to impact, were identified. Radar data and examination of the accident site indicated that the airplane was in level flight at a constant airspeed prior to impact with terrain. Toxicology testing of the pilot's muscle and liver specimens revealed the presence of 5 different medications used for the treatment of mental disorders. The pilot, a neurosurgeon, indicated no medications or medical conditions on his last application for airman medical certificate less than two months prior to the accident. That application noted that the pilot's medical license had been revoked.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the failure of the pilot to maintain adequate terrain separation, for undetermined reasons, which resulted in controlled flight into terrain. A contributing factor was the mountainous terrain.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings
1. (C) CLEARANCE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. USE OF INAPPROPRIATE MEDICATION/DRUG - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - MOUNTAINOUS/HILLY

Factual Information

HISTORY OF FLIGHT

On June 16, 2007, approximately 1610 mountain daylight time (MDT), a Beech 58 twin-engine airplane, N6750R, was destroyed when it impacted mountainous terrain during cruise flight near Placitas, New Mexico. The private pilot, who was the sole occupant, was fatally injured. The airplane was registered to Memorial Park Engineering and Construction Company, Inc., Torrance, California, and operated by the pilot. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and a flight plan was not filed for the Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91 personal flight. The flight departed Zamperini Field Airport (TOA), Torrance, California, approximately 1130 pacific daylight time (PDT) with a destination of Jackson, Mississippi (HKS). A family member of the pilot reported to the Federal Aviation Administration that the pilot had planned a fuel stop in Clinton, Oklahoma.

At 1026 PDT, the pilot contacted the Hawthorne Automated Flight Service Station (AFSS), Hawthorne, California, to obtain a standard weather briefing for a visual flight rules (VFR) flight from TOA to HKS with a planned departure time of 1100. The pilot stated that his planned routing was via Palm Springs, California; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Amarillo, Texas; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Shreveport, Louisiana; and then to Jackson. During the six minute briefing, the briefer informed the pilot of the weather along his route of flight which included some rain showers and scattered thunderstorms on the border of Arizona and Texas, and a significant meteorological information (SIGMET) for thunderstorm activity in eastern Texas and western Louisiana.

According to radar data, the airplane departed TOA to the east and continued on a easterly heading toward Oklahoma. The last three radar targets indicated that the airplane was at an altitude of approximately 9,700 feet mean sea level (msl). The last recorded radar target was received at 16:04:06. Albuquerque Air Route Traffic Control Center had no communications with the accident airplane.

On June 17, 2007, at 1547, an Alert Notice (ALNOT) was issued for the accident airplane. According to local authorities, the airplane was located at 1845, approximately 5 miles east of Albuquerque in the Sandia Mountains.

PERSONNEL INFORMATION

The pilot, age 55, held a private pilot certificate with single and multi-engine land, and instrument airplane ratings. The pilot was issued a second class medical certificate on May 1, 2007 with the limitations: "Must wear lenses for distant - possess glasses for near vision." The pilot's logbook was not located during the investigation. According to the pilot's last

application for a Federal Aviation Administration medical certificate, dated May 1, 2007, he had accumulated 3,709 total flight hours.

AIRCRAFT INFORMATION

The 1980-model Beech 58, serial number TH-1130, was a low-wing, twin-engine airplane. The airplane was powered by two Teledyne Continental Motors (TCM) IO-520-CB8B engines. The engines were equipped with three-blade Hartzell constant speed propellers. The airplane was configured to carry six occupants.

The airplane was issued a standard airworthiness certificate on September 19, 1980, and was certificated for normal category operations. A review of the airplane maintenance records revealed the airframe underwent an annual inspection on August 1, 2006. Total time on the airframe at the annual inspection was 3,222.3 hours. The aircraft tachometer and hobbs meter were not located at the accident site and total airframe time at the time of the accident could not be determined.

On April 4, 2007, a terrain awareness upgrade was added to the Garmin GNS430 global positioning system (GPS). This terrain upgrade provides information about the general terrain environment in relation to GPS position and any approaching terrain conflicts.

METEOROLOGIAL INFORMATION

At 1556, the Albuquerque International Sunport Airport (ABQ), Albuquerque, New Mexico, automated surface observing system (ASOS), located approximately 10 miles southwest of the accident site, reported the wind from 160 degrees at 3 knots, visibility 10 statute miles, scattered clouds at 9,000 and 15,000 feet, ceiling broken at 25,000 feet, temperature 31 degrees Celsius, dew point 8 degrees Celsius, and an altimeter setting of 30.06 inches of Mercury.

WRECKAGE AND IMPACT INFORMATION

The accident site was located in tree-covered mountainous terrain at 35 degrees 13.988 minutes north latitude and 106 degrees 27.397 minutes west longitude, at an elevation of approximately 9,750 feet msl, approximately 300 feet below the top of the terrain. The terrain was covered in 10-15 foot tall scrub oak trees on a 45-degree slope. The airplane wreckage was distributed along a measured magnetic heading of 080 degrees. The initial impact point, a 10-15 foot limestone cliff band, was consistent with the left wing and fuselage. Several trees, located at the start of the wreckage distribution path prior to the initial impact point, displayed fresh breaks and fractures at the same height.

The instrument panel and portions of the forward fuselage were located adjacent to the initial impact point. The instrument panel was destroyed. The throttle quadrant was separated and destroyed. The landing gear selector was found in the up position. The altimeter was

recovered and indicated a pressure altitude of 9,600 feet msl, with an altimeter setting of 29.85 inches of mercury.

The left wing was destroyed and separated from the fuselage at the wing root. Portions of the left wing were embedded into the cliff face. The aileron was separated and located adjacent to the initial impact point. The left engine was destroyed and scattered fragments were located adjacent to the initial impact point.

The right wing, with the engine separated, was located approximately 400 feet from the initial impact. Both the flap and aileron were still attached.

The empennage, which included the horizontal and vertical stabilizers with their respective control surfaces, was located approximately 350 feet from the initial impact in the wreckage distribution path. All trim surfaces were within their normal operating ranges. Control continuity was established from the autopilot servo to the control surface. The nose landing gear assembly separated and came to rest approximately 500 feet from the initial impact.

The left engine was destroyed and was located adjacent to the initial impact. The spinner and propeller pitch spring were embedded into the cliff face. The right engine was not located.

Four propeller blades were located adjacent to the initial impact and displayed lead edge gouging.

MEDICAL AND PATHOLOGICAL INFORMATION

An autopsy was performed on the pilot by the Office of the Medical Investigator, The University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center, Albuquerque, New Mexico, on June 19 and June 26, 2007. Specimens were retained for toxicological analysis by the FAA Civil Aeromedical Institute’s (CAMI) Forensic and Accident Research Center, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The cause of death was determined to be from multiple blunt force injuries.

The CAMI toxicological report revealed the presence of the following drugs in the pilot's muscle and liver specimens: Fluoxetine, Sertraline, Bupropion, Citalopram, Propranolol, and Olanzapine.

According to FAA medical records, the pilot's most recent Application for a third Class Medical Certificate indicated "no" in response to "Do you currently use any medication," and also "no" in response to all items under "Medical History," including specifically, "Mental disorders of any sort; depression, anxiety, etc" and "Eye or vision trouble except glasses." The application noted "yes" in response to "History of non-traffic conviction," and under "Explanations" noted "Idaho County, Idaho 10/06 misdemeanor for property damage, withheld judgment." Under "Occupation" is noted "Physician," and under "Employer" is noted "None." Under "Comments on history and findings" is noted, "Applicant is a neurosurgeon. He states that he had his medical license revoked in California, but he did not give a specific reason for this. The incident in

Idaho involved someone that trespassed on his property."

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Performance data calculations, made by the NTSB Investigator-in-charge, indicated that the fuel required for a flight from TOA to Clinton, Oklahoma, under the weather conditions the day of the accident flight, was approximately 180 gallons. The accident airplane had a useable fuel capacity of 136 gallons.

Parties to the investigation included the FAA Flight Standards District Office, Albuquerque, New Mexico, Teledyne Continental Motors, Mobile, Alabama, and Hawker Beechcraft, Wichita, Kansas.

The aircraft wreckage was released to AIG Insurance Company, Scottsdale, Arizona, on July 12, 2007.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	**Age:**	55,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	**Seat Occupied:**	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	**Restraint Used:**	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	**Second Pilot Present:**	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	**Toxicology Performed:**	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 2 With waivers/limitations	**Last FAA Medical Exam:**	May 1, 2007
Occupational Pilot:	No	**Last Flight Review or Equivalent:**	
Flight Time:	3709 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Beech	**Registration:**	N6750R
Model/Series:	58	**Aircraft Category:**	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		**Amateur Built:**	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	**Serial Number:**	TH-1130
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	**Seats:**	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	August 1, 2006 Annual	**Certified Max Gross Wt.:**	5400 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		**Engines:**	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		**Engine Manufacturer:**	Continental
ELT:	Installed, activated, aided in locating accident	**Engine Model/Series:**	IO-520-CB
Registered Owner:	Memorial Park Engineering & Construction Co Inc	**Rated Power:**	285 Horsepower
Operator:	Robert P. Iacono	**Operating Certificate(s) Held:**	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	**Condition of Light:**	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	ABQ,5354 ft msl	**Distance from Accident Site:**	14 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	15:56 Local	**Direction from Accident Site:**	32°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 9000 ft AGL	**Visibility**	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 25000 ft AGL	**Visibility (RVR):**	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	3 knots /	**Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:**	/
Wind Direction:	160°	**Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:**	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.09 inches Hg	**Temperature/Dew Point:**	30°C / 7°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	TORRANCE, CA (TOA)	**Type of Flight Plan Filed:**	None
Destination:	CLINTON, OK (CSM)	**Type of Clearance:**	None
Departure Time:	11:30 Local	**Type of Airspace:**	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	**Aircraft Damage:**	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:		**Aircraft Fire:**	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	**Aircraft Explosion:**	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal	**Latitude, Longitude:**	35.219165,-106.450836

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Sauer, Aaron
Additional Participating Persons:	Richard Cramer; FAA-Albuquerque FSDO; Albuquerque, NM Jason Lukasik; Teledyne Continental Motors; Mobile, AL Michael J Gibbons; Hawker Beechcraft Company; Wichita, KS
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