



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Gunnison, Colorado	Accident Number:	DEN08CA045
Date & Time:	December 29, 2007, 10:05 Local	Registration:	N33MF
Aircraft:	Piper PA-46-310P	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	5 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The airplane was taking off. As the pilot began his takeoff roll, he noticed the airplane sliding just a little. As he continued to accelerate, he got the airplane straight and proceeded down the center of the runway. The pilot said that at about 75 knots, he rotated. He said he was watching a snow plow that was farther down the runway and off to the side. He'd just gotten into the air, approximately 5 feet above the runway, when the airplane drifted left and the left main landing gear caught a snow bank. The airplane came down, impacting the ground off the side of the runway and coming to rest in the snow. The pilot and the four passengers on board were not injured. The airplane sustained substantial damage. The pilot said he felt he did not put in enough right rudder to counter the torque of the propeller after he left the ground.

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 directional control of the airplane during takeoff resulting in the airplane hitting a snowbank and subsequently, the ground.

Findings

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

Findings

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

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Findings

2. TERRAIN CONDITION - SNOWBANK

Factual Information

The airplane was taking off. As the pilot began his takeoff roll, he noticed the airplane sliding just a little. As he continued to accelerate, he got the airplane straight and proceeded down the center of the runway. The pilot said that at about 75 knots, he rotated. He said he was watching a snow plow that was farther down the runway and off to the side. He'd just gotten into the air, approximately 5 feet above the runway, when the airplane drifted left and the left main landing gear caught a snow bank. The airplane came down, impacting the ground off the side of the runway and coming to rest in the snow. The pilot and the four passengers on board were not injured. The airplane sustained substantial damage. The pilot said he felt he did not put in enough right rudder to counter the torque of the propeller after he left the ground.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	49, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3	Last FAA Medical Exam:	October 1, 2007
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	1400 hours (Total, all aircraft), 25 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N33MF
Model/Series:	PA-46-310P	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	4608058
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	
Date/Type of Last Inspection:		Certified Max Gross Wt.:	
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:		Engine Model/Series:	IO-550
Registered Owner:	Freedom Aviation	Rated Power:	
Operator:	Max A. Hale	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:		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:	Gunnison, CO (GUC)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Destination:	Phoenix, AZ	Type of Clearance:	IFR
Departure Time:	10:05 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	4 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	
Total Injuries:	5 None	Latitude, Longitude:	38.533889,-106.933052

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Bowling, David

Additional Participating Persons:

Original Publish Date: February 28, 2008

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=67317>

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](#).