



AVIATION



HIGHWAY



MARINE



RAILROAD



PIPELINE

Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Tallahassee, Florida	Accident Number:	MIA08CA054
Date & Time:	February 8, 2008, 20:40 Local	Registration:	N52495
Aircraft:	Cessna 177RG	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Fuel exhaustion	Injuries:	1 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot planed a flight from Frederick, Maryland to Tallahassee, FL. While on approach to the Tallahassee Regional Airport, the engine lost power and the airplane collided with powerlines and crashed onto a y road. A Leon County Sheriff's Office representative stated he heard over the dispatch radio communications to contact the local airport; an airplane was having problems. A few moments later he observed an explosion at the top of the power lines located on the southeast corner of the intersection, almost immediately the entire city in the vicinity went completely dark. He observed flames rain down over the intersection. Approximately 6 to 8 people ran from the gas station area located on the southwest corner of the intersection. This all took place as he heard over the dispatch radio "it's down, it's down." He observed an object strike the ground. The airplane was near vertical with the front of the airplane in the grass at the southwest corner of the intersection. He came to the aid of the pilot, the sole occupant in the airplane. He observed the pilot secured by the seatbelt and was pinned in the crashed cockpit area of the airplane. Fire rescue extracted the pilot and transported him to the local hospital. The responding FAA inspector stated that the airplane crashed 3 miles northeast of the Tallahassee Regional Airport, during an emergency landing. The airplane struck electrical power lines and a pole during the approach. The airplane impacted the ground nose first and remained in a near vertical position. There was no post crash fire and the fuel tanks were empty at the initial inspection of the airplane wreckage. During the interview with the pilot, he admitted to being embarrassed because he ran out of fuel in flight. The pilot stated "I even rocked the wings to use every drop of fuel". The pilot had flown about 5 hours 34 minutes at the time of the accident and he departed with 60 gallons of fuel.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

Pilot's inaccurate fuel management resulting in fuel exhaustion.

Findings

Personnel issues	(general) - Pilot
Aircraft	Fuel - Fluid management
Environmental issues	Wire - Not specified

Factual Information

History of Flight

Approach	Fuel exhaustion (Defining event)
Emergency descent	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

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):	None	Second Pilot Present:	
Instructor Rating(s):		Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3	Last FAA Medical Exam:	September 1, 2007
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	500 hours (Total, all aircraft), 330 hours (Total, this make and model), 1 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N52495
Model/Series:	177RG	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	IO-360-A1B6D
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	
Date/Type of Last Inspection:		Certified Max Gross Wt.:	
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:		Engine Model/Series:	IO-360-A1B6D
Registered Owner:	Hal E. McCord	Rated Power:	
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Night
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KTHL	Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:	20:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Thin Overcast / 7000 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 11000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots / 0 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	220°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29.92 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	14°C / 8°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Frederick, MD (KFDK)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	VFR
Destination:	Tallahassee, FL (KTLH)	Type of Clearance:	VFR
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	
Total Injuries:	1 Serious	Latitude, Longitude:	30.396389,-84.349998

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Obregon, Jose

Additional Participating Persons:

Original Publish Date: April 30, 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=67491>

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](#).