



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Latrobe, Pennsylvania	Accident Number:	MIA08FA177
Date & Time:	August 31, 2008, 09:40 Local	Registration:	N3180M
Aircraft:	Cessna T310R	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Loss of control in flight	Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

A witness reported that she was outside of her home when she saw the two-engine airplane flying low over her house. The airplane flew with "the left wing up and the right wing down," the engines sounded like they were "running at full power," and the airplane was "descending very fast." As she watched the airplane clear trees and disappear from view, she heard a "thud" which was followed by a plume of white and gray smoke. She then ran towards the smoke, and found the downed airplane in a heavily wooded area. Examination of the airplane revealed no evidence of preimpact mechanical failure or malfunction. The pilot did not hold a current Federal Aviation Administration medical certificate and had been hospitalized for congestive heart failure several months prior to the accident. The pilot's cardiologist stated the decedent should not have been flying with his medical condition.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's impairment/incapacitation (cardiovascular) resulting in the pilot being unable to control the airplane.

Findings

Personnel issues	Cardiovascular - Pilot
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Factual Information

History of Flight

Enroute-cruise	Loss of control in flight (Defining event)
Uncontrolled descent	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

HISTORY OF FLIGHT

On August 31, 2008, about 0940 eastern daylight time, a Cessna T310R N3180M, impacted the ground near Latrobe, Pennsylvania, after it lost control during cruise flight. The certificated private pilot, who was also the owner of the airplane, was killed. The airplane was destroyed by impact forces and a post crash fire. The flight was operated as a personal flight under the provisions of 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 91, and no flight plan was filed. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the accident.

A witness reported that she was outside of her home when she saw a two-engine airplane flying low over her house. The airplane flew with "the left wing up and the right wing down," the engines sounded like they were "running at full power," and the airplane was "descending very fast." She continued by saying that she knew the airplane was in trouble as it continued down on a steep trajectory. As she watched the airplane clear trees and disappear from view, she heard a "thud," which was followed by a plume of white and gray smoke. She then ran towards the smoke, and found the downed airplane in a heavily wooded area.

The coroner's Report of Investigation notes that the deputy coroner met with the pilot's friend, a flight instructor. The flight instructor said that the pilot left him a voice mail the morning of the accident, stating that he was going to fly at 0900 hours, and that the pilot would meet him at the hanger. The flight instructor returned the call, and left a voice mail stating that he would be "unable to fly with [the pilot] today." The instructor told the deputy coroner that the pilot had not flown for 3 weeks. The instructor also stated to the deputy coroner that he did not fly with the pilot as an instructor, but as a flying companion and noted that the pilot "was a good pilot and could handle in-flight emergencies if they arose."

PERSONNEL INFORMATION

The pilot, age 78, held a private pilot certificate, with ratings for airplane single-engine land and airplane multiengine land. His certificate was issued on December 13, 1998. His last third-class medical certificate was issued on May 4, 2000, with waivers for corrective lenses. The pilot's logbook was not recovered for review, and he reported 800 hours of total flight experience on his last medical application.

AIRCRAFT INFORMATION

The six-seat, low-wing, retractable-gear airplane was manufactured in 1980. It was powered by two Continental TSIO-520 SER, 300-horsepower engines, and equipped with three-bladed McCauley propellers. The airplane's logbooks were not recovered for review. The logbooks were reportedly in the pilot's hanger, but were not located.

METEOROLOGICAL INFORMATION

The reported weather at LBE, at 0850, included clear skies and wind from 020 degrees at 8 knots.

WRECKAGE AND IMPACT INFORMATION

The wreckage was located in a heavily wooded area, 15 miles northwest from the Arnold Palmer Regional Airport (LBE), Latrobe, Pennsylvania. The wreckage debris path was 75 feet in length on a 190-degree magnetic heading. Examination of the airplane revealed that all flight control surfaces were located at the wreckage site. The entire airframe was fragmented throughout the debris path, and was fire damaged. All flight control cables ends exhibited evidence of tension overload. Examination of the airframe and flight control system components revealed no evidence of preimpact mechanical malfunction.

Examination of the left engine revealed that it was separated from the airframe and found along the debris path. All engine accessories, fuel lines, and ignition leads were separated from the engine case. The intake manifold and exhaust manifolds were separated from the case. The propeller flange was impact damaged and the propeller was separated from the flange. The propeller hub was broken and the three propeller blades were separated, and were located along the debris path. All three blades displayed chordwise bending. Examination of the engine and system components revealed no evidence of preimpact mechanical malfunction.

Examination of the right engine revealed that it was separated from the airframe and found along the debris path. All engine accessories, fuel lines, and ignition leads were separated from the engine case. The intake manifold and exhaust manifolds were separated from the case. The propeller flange was impact damaged and the propeller was separated from the flange. The propeller hub was broken and the three propeller blades were separated and located along the debris path. All three blades displayed chordwise bending. Examination of the engine and system components revealed no evidence of preimpact mechanical malfunction.

PATHOLOGICAL INFORMATION

An autopsy was performed on the pilot on September 1, 2008, by the Division of Natural Sciences, Gross Anatomy, medical examiner's office, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, as authorized by the coroner, County of Westmoreland. The cause of death was reported as "multiple injuries

due to blunt trauma." The autopsy report noted that "no recognizable visceral organs" were identified.

The coroner's Report of Investigation noted, in part, "The decedent was recently hospitalized for congestive hear failure and had a follow-up with [his cardiologist] on May 1, 2008. His diagnoses included; cardiomyopathy, aortic regurgitation, mitral regurgitation, prior myocardial infarction, iron deficiency anemia, significant pulmonary hypertension, biatrial dilatation, chronic atrial fibrillation and duodenal diverticula...[The pilot's cardiologist] told me he did not know the decedent was a pilot and was actively flying an airplane. He stated the decedent should not have been flying with his medical condition."

Forensic toxicology was performed on specimens from the pilot by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Bioaeronautical Sciences Research Laboratory, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The toxicology report stated no ethanol was detected in the liver or muscle, and no drugs were detected in the liver.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	78, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 3	Last FAA Medical Exam:	May 1, 2000
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	800 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N3180M
Model/Series:	T310R	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	310R1866
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	5500 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	TSIO-520 BB
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	300 Horsepower
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	LBE,1199 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:	08:50 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	190°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	20 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	8 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	20°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.2 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	18°C / 14°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	LATROBE, PA (LBE)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	LATROBE, PA (LBE)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	09:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	Arnold Palmer Regional LBE	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	1199 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:		IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	On-ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	40.460834,-79.60778(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Alleyne, Eric
Additional Participating Persons:	Jeffery Halliday; FAA/FSDO; Philadelphia, PA Henry Southernland; Cessna Aircraft Company; Wichita, KS Terry Horton; Continental Teledyne Motors; Mobile, AL
Original Publish Date:	April 22, 2010
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	The NTSB traveled to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=68835

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](#).