



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Healy, Alaska	Accident Number:	ANC09LA023
Date & Time:	March 13, 2009, 16:00 Local	Registration:	N6478V
Aircraft:	Helio H-295	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Collision during takeoff/land	Injuries:	3 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 135: Air taxi & commuter - Non-scheduled		

Analysis

The airline transport pilot was on an on-demand air taxi passenger flight in a ski-equipped airplane. The pilot said that the accident occurred while he was packing snow at the landing site by laying down tracks with the airplane's skis in preparation for landing. During the last pass, he said that as the airplane lifted off the snow, the wings encountered high brush; when he pulled back on the elevator control to clear the brush, he said that he believed that the tail ski contacted the snow and dragged the airplane down into the brush. The pilot said that there were no known mechanical problems with the airplane prior to the accident. The fuselage and empennage sustained structural damage during the encounter with brush and terrain.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's delay in initiating a climb while he was packing snow with the airplane's skis in preparation for landing, resulting in a collision with brush.

Findings

Personnel issues	Delayed action - Pilot
Environmental issues	Snowy/icy terrain - Effect on equipment
Aircraft	Climb rate - Not attained/maintained

Factual Information

History of Flight

Initial climb	Collision during takeoff/land (Defining event)
----------------------	--

On March 13, 2009, about 1600 Alaska daylight time, a ski-equipped Helio H-295 airplane, N6478V, sustained substantial damage when it impacted terrain while laying down tracks to pack snow on the snow-covered terrain prior to landing, at the Stampede airstrip, about 42 miles west of Healy, Alaska. The airplane was operated by Wright Air Service, Inc., Fairbanks, Alaska, as a visual flight rules (VFR), on-demand passenger flight under Title 14, CFR Part 135, when the accident occurred. The airline transport pilot and two passengers were not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and a VFR flight plan was filed. The flight departed Fairbanks, Alaska, about 1510.

During a telephone conversation with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigator-in-charge (IIC) on March 14, the pilot said he was laying down tracks with the airplane's ski's to pack the snow on the airstrip prior to landing. He said when the airplane lifted off the snow, the wings encountered high brush, and he pulled back on the elevator control to clear the brush. He said as he did so, he believed the tail ski contacted the snow and dragged the airplane down into the brush. The pilot said there were no known mechanical problems with the airplane prior to the accident. The fuselage and empennage sustained structural damage during the encounter with brush and terrain.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline transport	Age:	37, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane single-engine	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	October 22, 2008
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	October 13, 2008
Flight Time:	12600 hours (Total, all aircraft), 3500 hours (Total, this make and model), 11100 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 140 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 50 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Helio	Registration:	N6478V
Model/Series:	H-295	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal; Utility	Serial Number:	1431
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel; Ski	Seats:	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	February 26, 2009 100 hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3800 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	8018 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	C126 installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	GO-480 SERIES
Registered Owner:	BURSIEL EQUIPMENT INC	Rated Power:	295 Horsepower
Operator:	WRIGHT AIR SERVICE INC	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	Commuter air carrier (135), On-demand air taxi (135)
Operator Does Business As:	Wright Air Service	Operator Designator Code:	HYTA

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:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	8 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	-29°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Fairbanks, AK (FAI)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	VFR
Destination:	Healy, AK	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	15:15 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	Stampede Z90	Runway Surface Type:	Grass/turf
Airport Elevation:	1850 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Snow
Runway Used:	33	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	Full stop;Traffic pattern

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	2 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 None	Latitude, Longitude:	63.748611,-150.329437

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Lewis, Lawrence
Additional Participating Persons: Eric Jones; FAA; Fairbanks, AK

Original Publish Date: June 11, 2009

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=73489>

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](#).