



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Torrance, California	Accident Number:	WPR10CA079
Date & Time:	November 29, 2009, 13:45 Local	Registration:	N8700
Aircraft:	Curtiss Wright TRAVEL AIR 4000	Aircraft Damage:	None
Defining Event:	Ground collision	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Positioning		

Analysis

The Travel Air pilot was taxiing down the 58-foot-wide asphalt lane that stretched between rows of hangar buildings toward a taxiway. Prior to beginning the taxi the pilot had visually checked the lane and had not observed any other aircraft in the lane between his position and the taxiway. The Travel Air is a tailwheel-type configuration, and the pilot was making continuous S-turns to look for obstructions ahead of his position. As he reached the end of the buildings, his propeller collided with the empennage of a stationary Lancair that had been pulled out of the end hangar. The pilot of the Lancair had started his engine and was contacting the Air Traffic Control Tower for a clearance onto the taxiway when the collision occurred. The point of the collision is in a non-movement ramp area not subject to air traffic control separation.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The Travel Air pilot's failure to maintain an adequate visual lookout during taxi.

Findings

Personnel issues	Monitoring other aircraft - Pilot
Personnel issues	Task monitoring/vigilance - Pilot

Factual Information

History of Flight

Taxi	Ground collision (Defining event)
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Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	76, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	November 26, 2008
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	(Estimated) 3000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 2000 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Curtiss Wright	Registration:	N8700
Model/Series:	TRAVEL AIR 4000	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	976
Landing Gear Type:		Seats:	3
Date/Type of Last Inspection:		Certified Max Gross Wt.:	
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	CONT MOTOR
ELT:		Engine Model/Series:	W670 SERIES
Registered Owner:	SMITH RICHARD CHARLES	Rated Power:	250 Horsepower
Operator:	SMITH RICHARD CHARLES	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:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Torrance, CA (TOA)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Torrance, CA (TOA)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	Zamperini Field Airport TOA	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:		IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

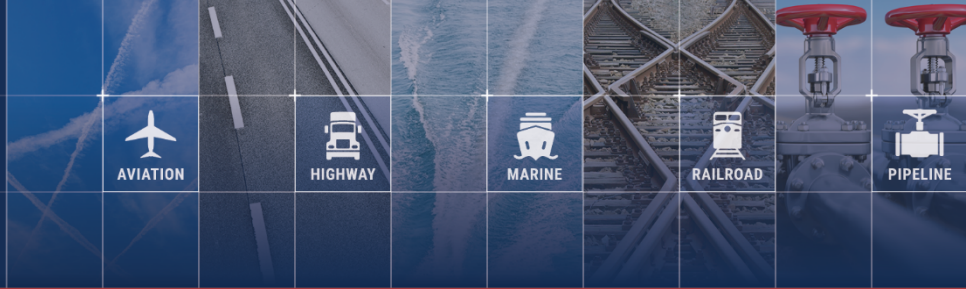
Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	None
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	33.803333,-118.339447(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Keliher, Zoe
Additional Participating Persons:	Bill McGowen; Federal Aviation Administration; Los Angeles, CA
Original Publish Date:	March 23, 2010
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.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=75157

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](#).



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Torrance, California	Accident Number:	WPR10CA079
Date & Time:	November 29, 2009, 13:45 Local	Registration:	N880RS
Aircraft:	SUTHERLAND RON LANCAIR 235	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Ground collision	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The Travel Air pilot was taxiing down the 58-foot-wide asphalt lane that stretched between rows of hangar buildings toward a taxiway. Prior to beginning the taxi the pilot had visually checked the lane and had not observed any other aircraft in the lane between his position and the taxiway. The Travel Air is a tailwheel-type configuration, and the pilot was making continuous S-turns to look for obstructions ahead of his position. As he reached the end of the buildings, his propeller collided with the empennage of a stationary Lancair that had been pulled out of the end hangar. The pilot of the Lancair had started his engine and was contacting the Air Traffic Control Tower for a clearance onto the taxiway when the collision occurred. The point of the collision is in a non-movement ramp area not subject to air traffic control separation.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The Travel Air pilot's failure to maintain an adequate visual lookout during taxi.

Findings

Personnel issues	Monitoring other aircraft - Pilot of other aircraft
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Factual Information

History of Flight

Taxi	Ground collision
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Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline transport; Commercial	Age:	51
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane; Helicopter	Second Pilot Present:	
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	October 20, 2008
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	3400 hours (Total, all aircraft), 530 hours (Total, this make and model), 2500 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	SUTHERLAND RON	Registration:	N880RS
Model/Series:	LANCAIR 235	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental (Special)	Serial Number:	88
Landing Gear Type:		Seats:	2
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:	O-320 SERIES
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	180 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:		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:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Torrance, CA (TOA)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	Unknown
Destination:	Torrance, CA (TOA)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	Zamperini Field Airport TOA	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:		IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	33.803333,-118.339447(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Keliher, Zoe
Additional Participating Persons:	Bill McGowen; Federal Aviation Administration; Los Angeles, CA
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Last Revision Date:	
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