



Aviation Investigation Final Report

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| Location: | McAlpin, Florida | Accident Number: | ERA12CA050 |
| Date & Time: | October 24, 2011, 12:10 Local | Registration: | N3169C |
| Aircraft: | AIR TRACTOR INC AT-301 | Aircraft Damage: | Substantial |
| Defining Event: | Low altitude operation/event | Injuries: | 1 None |
| Flight Conducted Under: | Part 137: Agricultural | | |

Analysis

According to the pilot, he had successfully completed six aerial application passes below transmission lines that ran diagonally above a rectangular agricultural field. The pilot had also successfully completed 11 or 12 similar application flights over the same field during previous years, including 1 earlier that month. As the pilot turned the airplane toward its seventh pass, sun position and spray residue on the windshield resulted in his briefly losing sight of the transmission lines. The pilot regained sight of the transmission lines and continued the pass; however, the airplane struck the lines, damaging the wing spar. The pilot did not report any preexisting mechanical anomalies with the airplane.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's misjudgment of the airplane's distance from known transmission lines.

Findings

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| Aircraft | Altitude - Incorrect use/operation |
| Personnel issues | Decision making/judgment - Pilot |
| Environmental issues | Wire - Contributed to outcome |

Factual Information

History of Flight

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| Maneuvering-low-alt flying | Low altitude operation/event (Defining event) |
| Maneuvering-low-alt flying | Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT) |

Pilot Information

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|----------------------------------|--|--|----------------|
| Certificate: | Commercial | Age: | 60, Male |
| Airplane Rating(s): | Single-engine land | Seat Occupied: | Single |
| Other Aircraft Rating(s): | None | Restraint Used: | |
| Instrument Rating(s): | None | Second Pilot Present: | No |
| Instructor Rating(s): | None | Toxicology Performed: | No |
| Medical Certification: | Class 2 With waivers/limitations | Last FAA Medical Exam: | August 1, 2011 |
| Occupational Pilot: | Yes | Last Flight Review or Equivalent: | March 26, 2011 |
| Flight Time: | 17000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 14000 hours (Total, this make and model), 17000 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 150 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 70 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft) | | |

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

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|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Aircraft Make: | AIR TRACTOR INC | Registration: | N3169C |
| Model/Series: | AT-301 | Aircraft Category: | Airplane |
| Year of Manufacture: | | Amateur Built: | |
| Airworthiness Certificate: | Restricted (Special) | Serial Number: | 301-0568 |
| Landing Gear Type: | Tailwheel | Seats: | 1 |
| Date/Type of Last Inspection: | September 15, 2011 Annual | Certified Max Gross Wt.: | 7000 lbs |
| Time Since Last Inspection: | | Engines: | 1 Reciprocating |
| Airframe Total Time: | | Engine Manufacturer: | P&W |
| ELT: | Not installed | Engine Model/Series: | R1340 SERIES |
| Registered Owner: | TERRYS AG SERVICE INC | Rated Power: | 600 Horsepower |
| Operator: | TERRYS AG SERVICE INC | Operating Certificate(s) Held: | |

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

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|---|----------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Conditions at Accident Site: | Visual (VMC) | Condition of Light: | Day |
| Observation Facility, Elevation: | 40J,44 ft msl | Distance from Accident Site: | 28 Nautical Miles |
| Observation Time: | 11:53 Local | Direction from Accident Site: | 270° |
| Lowest Cloud Condition: | Unknown | Visibility | |
| Lowest Ceiling: | Unknown | Visibility (RVR): | |
| Wind Speed/Gusts: | 3 knots / | Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Wind Direction: | 330° | Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Altimeter Setting: | 30.15 inches Hg | Temperature/Dew Point: | 16°C / 9°C |
| Precipitation and Obscuration: | No Obscuration; No Precipitation | | |
| Departure Point: | Branford, FL (0FL1) | Type of Flight Plan Filed: | None |
| Destination: | Branford, FL (0FL1) | Type of Clearance: | None |
| Departure Time: | | Type of Airspace: | |

Airport Information

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|-----------------------------|------|----------------------------------|------|
| Airport: | None | Runway Surface Type: | |
| Airport Elevation: | | Runway Surface Condition: | |
| Runway Used: | | IFR Approach: | None |
| Runway Length/Width: | | VFR Approach/Landing: | None |

Wreckage and Impact Information

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|----------------------------|--------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Crew Injuries: | 1 None | Aircraft Damage: | Substantial |
| Passenger Injuries: | | Aircraft Fire: | None |
| Ground Injuries: | N/A | Aircraft Explosion: | None |
| Total Injuries: | 1 None | Latitude, Longitude: | 30.1375,-82.889167(est) |

Administrative Information

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| Investigator In Charge (IIC): | Cox, Paul |
| Additional Participating Persons: | Frank Rios; FAA/FSDO; Orlando, FL |
| Original Publish Date: | March 27, 2012 |
| 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=82186 |

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