



Aviation Investigation Final Report

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|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| Location: | Truth or Consequences, New Mexico | Accident Number: | CEN12CA121 |
| Date & Time: | January 3, 2012, 11:30 Local | Registration: | N120J |
| Aircraft: | BUTLER JOHN R SX 300 | Aircraft Damage: | Substantial |
| Defining Event: | Miscellaneous/other | Injuries: | 1 None |
| Flight Conducted Under: | Part 91: General aviation - Personal | | |

Analysis

Prior to takeoff, the pilot forgot to properly latch the canopy. Shortly after rotation, the pilot noticed that the canopy had partially opened, which resulted in a distraction and a loss of airplane control. Subsequently, the airplane contacted the runway, and the landing gear collapsed. The airplane came to rest upright on the side of the runway. Postaccident examination of the airplane revealed that the fuselage was bent and buckled. The pilot reported no preimpact mechanical malfunctions or failures with the airplane that would have precluded normal operation.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot did not maintain airplane control during takeoff due to his distraction with the improperly secured canopy, which he forgot to latch.

Findings

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| Aircraft | Passenger/crew doors - Incorrect use/operation |
| Personnel issues | Aircraft control - Pilot |
| Personnel issues | Attention - Pilot |

Factual Information

History of Flight

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| Takeoff | Miscellaneous/other (Defining event) |
| Takeoff | Loss of control in flight |
| Takeoff | Abnormal runway contact |

Pilot Information

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|---------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Certificate: | Private | Age: | 59,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): | None | Toxicology Performed: | No |
| Medical Certification: | Class 3 With waivers/limitations | Last FAA Medical Exam: | September 12, 2011 |
| Occupational Pilot: | UNK | Last Flight Review or Equivalent: | February 19, 2011 |
| Flight Time: | 1296 hours (Total, all aircraft), 154 hours (Total, this make and model), 1219 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 16 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 8 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft) | | |

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

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|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Aircraft Make: | BUTLER JOHN R | Registration: | N120J |
| Model/Series: | SX 300 | Aircraft Category: | Airplane |
| Year of Manufacture: | | Amateur Built: | Yes |
| Airworthiness Certificate: | Experimental (Special) | Serial Number: | 60 |
| Landing Gear Type: | Tricycle | Seats: | 2 |
| Date/Type of Last Inspection: | March 1, 2011 Condition | Certified Max Gross Wt.: | 2400 lbs |
| Time Since Last Inspection: | | Engines: | 1 Reciprocating |
| Airframe Total Time: | 1350 Hrs at time of accident | Engine Manufacturer: | LYCOMING |
| ELT: | Installed, not activated | Engine Model/Series: | AEIO-540 |
| Registered Owner: | On file | Rated Power: | 300 Horsepower |
| Operator: | On file | Operating Certificate(s) Held: | None |

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

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|---|----------------------------------|---|----------|
| 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: | 10°C |
| Precipitation and Obscuration: | | | |
| Departure Point: | Truth or Consequences, NM (TCS) | Type of Flight Plan Filed: | None |
| Destination: | Truth or Consequences, NM (TCS) | Type of Clearance: | None |
| Departure Time: | 11:30 Local | Type of Airspace: | |

Airport Information

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|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------|
| Airport: | Truth or Consequences Municipa TCS | Runway Surface Type: | |
| Airport Elevation: | 4853 ft msl | Runway Surface Condition: | Dry |
| Runway Used: | 13 | IFR Approach: | None |
| Runway Length/Width: | 7200 ft / 75 ft | 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: | 33.236946,-107.271667(est) |

Administrative Information

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| Investigator In Charge (IIC): | Sauer, Aaron |
| Additional Participating Persons: | Ken Hand; Federal Aviation Administration; Albuquerque, NM |
| 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.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=82615 |

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](#).