



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

|                                |                                      |                         |             |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Location:</b>               | Somerset, Colorado                   | <b>Accident Number:</b> | CEN12LA126  |
| <b>Date &amp; Time:</b>        | January 6, 2012, 16:00 Local         | <b>Registration:</b>    | N127AK      |
| <b>Aircraft:</b>               | Aviat A1                             | <b>Aircraft Damage:</b> | Substantial |
| <b>Defining Event:</b>         | Loss of control on ground            | <b>Injuries:</b>        | 1 None      |
| <b>Flight Conducted Under:</b> | Part 91: General aviation - Personal |                         |             |

## Analysis

The pilot attempted a takeoff on a snow-covered runway that he had landed on earlier in the day. The snow was about 6 inches deep. During the takeoff roll, the airplane struck a snow drift and nosed over. The pilot reported no mechanical anomalies 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's inadequate takeoff planning/preparation, which resulted in the airplane impacting a snow drift during the takeoff roll.

## Findings

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <b>Personnel issues</b>     | (general) - Pilot                                       |
| <b>Environmental issues</b> | Snow/slush/ice covered surface - Contributed to outcome |

# Factual Information

## History of Flight

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Takeoff | Abnormal runway contact                    |
| Takeoff | Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)         |
| Takeoff | Loss of control on ground (Defining event) |
| Takeoff | Nose over/nose down                        |

On January 6, 2012, about 1600 mountain standard time, an Aviat Aircraft Inc A-1B, N127AK, nosed over when it struck a snow drift during takeoff roll on a snow covered runway at Abbott Ranch Private Airstrip near Somerset, Colorado. The certificated commercial pilot was uninjured. The airplane sustained substantial damage. The airplane was registered to Plane Living LLC and operated by the pilot under the provisions of 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91 as a personal flight. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and a flight plan had not been filed for the flight destined for Montrose Regional Airport, Montrose, Colorado.

The pilot stated that he departed Montrose Regional Airport, Montrose, Colorado, about 1330, en route to Abbott Ranch Private Airstrip to check on his cabin. He said that when he landed, the runway was covered with about 6 inches of snow.

The pilot stated that at the time of departure he was attempting a maximum performance takeoff on runway 03 (1,600 feet by 75 feet, snow covered turf). The direction of takeoff was uphill. He felt the tailwheel digging into the snow on the runway shortly after the takeoff roll began. About 300 feet down the runway, the tail lifted and the main landing gear wheels struck a one foot high snow drift. The airplane then nosed over.

The pilot stated in his postaccident recommendation that the accident might have been prevented by packing down the snow on the runway using a snowcat or other equipment.

The airplane was equipped with Alaska Bush 29 inch tires.

## Pilot Information

|                                  |   |  |               |
|----------------------------------|---|--|---------------|
| <b>Certificate:</b>              | Commercial; Private   | <b>Age:</b>                              | 59, Male      |
| <b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>       | Single-engine land; Multi-engine land   | <b>Seat Occupied:</b>                    | Front         |
| <b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b> | None  | <b>Restraint Used:</b>                   |               |
| <b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>     | Airplane  | <b>Second Pilot Present:</b>             | No            |
| <b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>     | None  | <b>Toxicology Performed:</b>             | No            |
| <b>Medical Certification:</b>    | Class 3 Without waivers/limitations   | <b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>            | July 19, 2011 |
| <b>Occupational Pilot:</b>       | No  | <b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b> | July 6, 2010  |
| <b>Flight Time:</b>              | 3463 hours (Total, all aircraft), 236 hours (Total, this make and model), 3277 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 29 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft) |  |               |

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

|                                      |  |                                       |                 |
|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Aircraft Make:</b>                | Aviat  | <b>Registration:</b>                  | N127AK          |
| <b>Model/Series:</b>                 | A1 B   | <b>Aircraft Category:</b>             | Airplane        |
| <b>Year of Manufacture:</b>          |  | <b>Amateur Built:</b>                 |                 |
| <b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>    | Normal   | <b>Serial Number:</b>                 | 2059            |
| <b>Landing Gear Type:</b>            | Tailwheel  | <b>Seats:</b>                         | 2               |
| <b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b> | September 8, 2011 Annual                               | <b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>       | 2000 lbs        |
| <b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>   |  | <b>Engines:</b>                       | 1 Reciprocating |
| <b>Airframe Total Time:</b>          | 527 Hrs at time of accident                            | <b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>           | Lycoming        |
| <b>ELT:</b>                          | Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident | <b>Engine Model/Series:</b>           | O&VO-360AIP     |
| <b>Registered Owner:</b>             | Plane Living LLC                                       | <b>Rated Power:</b>                   | 180 Horsepower  |
| <b>Operator:</b>                     | Pilot  | <b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b> | None            |

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

|   |                                  |   |                   |
|---|----------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| <b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>     | Visual (VMC)                     | <b>Condition of Light:</b>                  | Day               |
| <b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b> | ASE,7820 ft msl                  | <b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>         | 64 Nautical Miles |
| <b>Observation Time:</b>                | 15:53 Local                      | <b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>        | 64°               |
| <b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>          | Clear                            | <b>Visibility</b>                           | 10 miles          |
| <b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>                  | None                             | <b>Visibility (RVR):</b>                    |                   |
| <b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>                | 3 knots / None                   | <b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>     | /                 |
| <b>Wind Direction:</b>                  | 320°                             | <b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b> | /                 |
| <b>Altimeter Setting:</b>               | 30.05 inches Hg                  | <b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>               | 5°C / -9°C        |
| <b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>   | No Obscuration; No Precipitation |   |                   |
| <b>Departure Point:</b>                 | Somerset, CO (PVT )              | <b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>           | None              |
| <b>Destination:</b>                     | Montrose, CO (MTJ )              | <b>Type of Clearance:</b>                   | None              |
| <b>Departure Time:</b>                  | 16:00 Local                      | <b>Type of Airspace:</b>                    |                   |

## Airport Information

|                             |                                   |                                  |                 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Airport:</b>             | Abbott Ranch Private Airstrip PVT | <b>Runway Surface Type:</b>      | Grass/turf;Snow |
| <b>Airport Elevation:</b>   | 7600 ft msl                       | <b>Runway Surface Condition:</b> | Snow            |
| <b>Runway Used:</b>         | 03                                | <b>IFR Approach:</b>             | None            |
| <b>Runway Length/Width:</b> | 1300 ft / 75 ft                   | <b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>     | None            |

## Wreckage and Impact Information

|                            |        |                             |                            |
|----------------------------|--------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Crew Injuries:</b>      | 1 None | <b>Aircraft Damage:</b>     | Substantial                |
| <b>Passenger Injuries:</b> |        | <b>Aircraft Fire:</b>       | None                       |
| <b>Ground Injuries:</b>    | N/A    | <b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>  | None                       |
| <b>Total Injuries:</b>     | 1 None | <b>Latitude, Longitude:</b> | 38.935001,-107.467781(est) |

## Administrative Information

**Investigator In Charge (IIC):** Gallo, Mitchell

**Additional Participating Persons:** Thomas Wiesner; Federal Aviation Administration; Denver, CO

**Original Publish Date:** October 9, 2012

**Last Revision Date:**

**Investigation Class:** [Class](#)

**Note:**

**Investigation Docket:** <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=82648>

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