



Aviation Investigation Final Report

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|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| Location: | Greenbrier, Alabama | Accident Number: | ERA13CA163 |
| Date & Time: | February 24, 2013, 17:00 Local | Registration: | N7310N |
| 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

Near the conclusion of the aerial application flight, the pilot was climbing the airplane away from the field when the right wing struck a tree, resulting in substantial damage. He subsequently returned to the private strip where the airplane was based and landed uneventfully. The pilot reported no 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's failure to maintain adequate clearance from trees.

Findings

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|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Personnel issues | Incorrect action performance - Pilot |
| Environmental issues | Tree(s) - 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: | 55, 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: | April 11, 2012 |
| Occupational Pilot: | Yes | Last Flight Review or Equivalent: | June 3, 2012 |
| Flight Time: | 7042 hours (Total, all aircraft), 320 hours (Total, this make and model), 6809 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 10 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 7 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 6 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft) | | |

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Aircraft Make: | AIR TRACTOR INC | Registration: | N7310N |
| Model/Series: | AT-301 | Aircraft Category: | Airplane |
| Year of Manufacture: | | Amateur Built: | |
| Airworthiness Certificate: | Restricted (Special) | Serial Number: | 301-0649 |
| Landing Gear Type: | | Seats: | 1 |
| Date/Type of Last Inspection: | April 20, 2012 Annual | Certified Max Gross Wt.: | 6000 lbs |
| Time Since Last Inspection: | | Engines: | 1 Reciprocating |
| Airframe Total Time: | 6351 Hrs as of last inspection | Engine Manufacturer: | Pratt and Whitney |
| ELT: | Not installed | Engine Model/Series: | R-1340 AN1 |
| Registered Owner: | LANIER FLYING SERVICE INC | Rated Power: | 600 Horsepower |
| Operator: | Lannie Towe | Operating Certificate(s) Held: | |
| Operator Does Business As: | Towe Boy's Agri Service | Operator Designator Code: | |

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

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|---|----------------------------------|---|------------------|
| Conditions at Accident Site: | Visual (VMC) | Condition of Light: | Day |
| Observation Facility, Elevation: | HSV,629 ft msl | Distance from Accident Site: | 3 Nautical Miles |
| Observation Time: | 14:53 Local | Direction from Accident Site: | 295° |
| Lowest Cloud Condition: | Clear | Visibility | 10 miles |
| Lowest Ceiling: | None | Visibility (RVR): | |
| Wind Speed/Gusts: | 6 knots / | Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Wind Direction: | 20° | Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Altimeter Setting: | 30.01 inches Hg | Temperature/Dew Point: | 14°C / -1°C |
| Precipitation and Obscuration: | No Obscuration; No Precipitation | | |
| Departure Point: | Greenbrier, AL (NONE) | Type of Flight Plan Filed: | None |
| Destination: | Greenbrier, AL (NONE) | Type of Clearance: | None |
| Departure Time: | 16:00 Local | Type of Airspace: | |

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: | 34.670833,-86.843055(est) |

Administrative Information

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| Investigator In Charge (IIC): | Diaz, Dennis |
| Additional Participating Persons: | Robert Bullock; FAA/FSDO; Vestavia Hills, AL |
| Original Publish Date: | July 18, 2013 |
| 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=86403 |

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](#).