



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Palmer, Alaska	Accident Number:	ANC14CA059
Date & Time:	August 2, 2014, 13:10 Local	Registration:	N821AK
Aircraft:	STEVEN R MCNEESE AIRBORNE EDGE X	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Loss of control in flight	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The non-certificated pilot was performing a high speed taxi test at a privately-owned, dirt and gravel-covered airport, in his tricycle-gear equipped weight-shift-control airplane. He reported that after arriving at the airport, he assembled the airplane, and then did a thorough preflight, which included checking wind conditions aloft by releasing helium balloons. He stated that the airplane had recently undergone an extensive rebuild, and he intended to do series postmaintenance taxi tests before flying the airplane. During the first high speed taxi test, as the airplane reached a takeoff speed, the pilot pushed the control bar forward, and the airplane became airborne. In an attempt to land the airplane and gain additional airspeed, the pilot pulled back on the control bar, but the airplane began to roll to the left. The pilot then applied full right control bar input, but the airplane continued to the left, and it subsequently collided with a stand of trees, sustaining substantial damage to the wings. The pilot stated that there were no preaccident mechanical anomalies 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 non-certificated pilot's failure to maintain directional control while performing a high speed taxi test and inadvertent lift-off, which resulted in an inflight collision with trees and terrain.

Findings

Personnel issues

Aircraft control - Pilot

Factual Information

History of Flight

Takeoff	Loss of control in flight (Defining event)
Takeoff	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

Pilot Information

Certificate:	None	Age:	63
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Lap only
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	None None	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	17 hours (Total, all aircraft), 17 hours (Total, this make and model), 1 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	STEVEN R MCNEESE	Registration:	N821AK
Model/Series:	AIRBORNE EDGE X Classic X	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	None	Serial Number:	582-796
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Continuous airworthiness	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	800 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	4 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	206 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Rotax
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	582
Registered Owner:	MCNEESE STEVEN R	Rated Power:	64 Horsepower
Operator:	MCNEESE STEVEN R	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	PAAQ,248 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	5 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	330°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 4000 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	4 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/ None
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.03 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	21°C / 11°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Palmer, AK (AK1)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Palmer, AK (AK1)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	Class E

Airport Information

Airport:	BUTTE MUNI AK1	Runway Surface Type:	Dirt;Grass/turf;Gravel
Airport Elevation:	64 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	07	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	1806 ft / 50 ft	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:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	61.530834,-149.011672(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Johnson, Clinton
Additional Participating Persons:	Larry Hammerbeck; FSDO-3; Anchorage, AK
Original Publish Date:	February 11, 2015
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=89802

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](#).