



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	BAYPORT, New York	Accident Number:	BF095LA039
Date & Time:	April 2, 1995, 13:36 Local	Registration:	N70234
Aircraft:	PIPER J3-C65	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

DURING TAKEOFF CLIMB, THE AIRPLANE'S ENGINE LOST TOTAL POWER. THE AIRPLANE STRUCK A FUEL TRUCK AND BRICK HANGAR WHILE BEING MANEUVERED BACK TO THE DEPARTED RUNWAY. POSTACCIDENT EXAMINATION OF THE AIRPLANE REVEALED THE FUEL SELECTOR VALVE WAS IN THE OFF POSITION. FUEL WAS FOUND IN THE ENGINE'S GASCOLATOR AND FUEL LINES. THE AIRPLANE'S THREE FUEL TANKS WERE BREACHED DURING THE ACCIDENT. WITNESSES AT THE AIRPORT STATED THAT THEY SAW THE PILOT 'TOP OFF' THE AIRPLANE PRIOR TO THE ACCIDENT FLIGHT. NO OTHER AIRFRAME OR ENGINE ANOMALIES WERE NOTED.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: THE PILOT'S IMPROPER POSITIONING OF THE FUEL SELECTOR.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(TOTAL) - NONMECHANICAL
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings

1. FLUID,FUEL - STARVATION
2. (C) FUEL TANK SELECTOR POSITION - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING AFTER TAKEOFF

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING AFTER TAKEOFF

Findings

- 3. OBJECT - VEHICLE
- 4. OBJECT - BUILDING(NONRESIDENTIAL)

Factual Information

On April 2, 1995, at 1336 eastern daylight time, a Piper PA-J3-C65, N70234, lost total engine power during takeoff climb from runway 18 at the Bayport Aerodrome, Bayport, New York. The airplane struck a fuel truck and hangar while being maneuvered back to the departed runway. The non certificated pilot was seriously injured. The airplane was destroyed. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed. The local flight was conducted under 14 CFR Part 91.

According to a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Safety Inspector, the pilot reported that during initial climb, about 200 to 300 feet above the ground, the airplane's engine "coughed" and then lost total power. The pilot reported he turned the airplane 180 degrees back toward the departed runway and during the maneuver the airplane's right wing impacted a fuel truck. The airplane impacted the fuel truck and continued into a brick hangar.

Postaccident examination of the airplane revealed the fuel flow selector valve was in the OFF position. Fuel was found in the engine's gascolator and throughout the engine fuel lines. The airplane's three fuel tanks were breached during the accident. Witnesses at the airport reported to a Federal Aviation Administration Inspector that the pilot "...topped off the airplane..." prior to the accident flight.

No other airframe or engine anomalies were noted.

The pilot received a National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident Report, Form 6120.1/2, but did not complete and return it to the Safety Board.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	None	Age:	60, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Front
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 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	October 12, 1994
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:			

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N70234
Model/Series:	J3-C65 J3-C65	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	17210
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	December 14, 1994 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1220 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	25 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3500 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	CONTINENTAL
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	C-85-12
Registered Owner:	ROBERT H. HUMESTON	Rated Power:	85 Horsepower
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	ISP	Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:	12:50 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown	Visibility	15 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 5300 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	8 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	350°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	9°C / -9°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	(23N)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	00:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	BAYPORT 23N	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	41 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	18	IFR Approach:	
Runway Length/Width:	2740 ft / 150 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Forced landing

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Serious	Latitude, Longitude:	40.739631,-73.050514(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Napolitan, Margaret

Additional Participating Persons: RON HUGHES; FARMINGDALE , NY
LARRY FIELDS; FARMINGDALE , NY

Original Publish Date: October 19, 1995

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=9035>

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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](#).