



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Southfields, New York	Accident Number:	ERA17LA338
Date & Time:	September 15, 2017, 13:11 Local	Registration:	N1356W
Aircraft:	PARKS RICHARD A STARDUSTER SA 100	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Fire/smoke (non-impact)	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The private pilot was conducting a cross-country, personal flight. He reported that, while approaching the destination airport at a cruise altitude of 2,500 ft mean sea level, he noticed smoke coming from the engine cowling. Concerned that there was a fire, he decided to immediately land the airplane in an open field. During touchdown, the airplane impacted 5-ft-tall grass and immediately cartwheeled.

Postaccident examination of the wreckage revealed that there was a loose oil line fitting at the oil cooler and that oil was dripping on the exhaust system, which likely resulted in the smoke the pilot saw before initiating the precautionary landing.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: A loose oil line that allowed oil to drip on the exhaust system, which resulted in smoke during cruise flight and a subsequent precautionary landing.

Findings

Aircraft	(general) - Not specified
Environmental issues	(general) - Effect on operation

Factual Information

History of Flight

Enroute-cruise	Fire/smoke (non-impact) (Defining event)
Emergency descent	Off-field or emergency landing
Landing	Loss of control on ground

On September 15, 2017, about 1311 eastern daylight time, an experimental amateur-built Starduster SA100, N1356W, was substantially damaged during a precautionary landing near Southfields, New York. The private pilot was not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and no flight plan was filed for the personal flight that departed Chester Airport (SNC), Chester, Connecticut, and was destined for Warwick Municipal Airport (N72), Warwick, New York. The airplane was operated under the provisions of 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91.

According to the pilot, he was flying on a short cross-country flight to N72, when during cruise flight at 2,500 ft mean sea level, he noticed smoke coming from the engine cowling. He was 7 miles from his destination, but decided to land immediately due to a possible fire. He saw an open field that he could land the airplane in; however, during touchdown he noticed the grass was about 5 ft tall. The airplane immediately cartwheeled upon touchdown and came to rest at a 45° nose-down attitude. Once he removed the airplane from the field and back to his residence, he noticed a loose oil line fitting at the oil cooler and oil dripping on the exhaust system. He stated there were no mechanical issues with the airplane other than the oil leak.

Examination of the wreckage by a Federal Aviation Administration inspector revealed that the airplane had sustained damage to the landing gear, right upper wing, rudder and vertical stabilizer. He also noticed an oil line that was loose, and observed a large amount of oil in the engine compartment and that oil had been leaking on the exhaust.

Review of the maintenance records revealed that the airplane's most recent conditional inspection was completed on February 14, 2017 and it had accumulated 586 total hours of service at that time.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	57, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Single
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	4-point
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Sport pilot	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	May 26, 2016
Flight Time:	(Estimated) 870 hours (Total, all aircraft), 21 hours (Total, this make and model), 810 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 8 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 8 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PARKS RICHARD A	Registration:	N1356W
Model/Series:	STARDUSTER SA 100 NO SERIES	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1982	Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental (Special)	Serial Number:	RAP-02
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	1
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	February 14, 2017 Condition	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1290 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	20 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	610 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	O-290 SERIES
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	125 Horsepower
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KSWF,491 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	13 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	16:45 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	9°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 1500 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.07 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	23°C / 20°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	CHESTER, CT (SNC)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	WARWICK, NY (N72)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	12:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class E

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:	41.284442,-74.144721(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Boggs, Daniel
Additional Participating Persons:	Jennie Coffey; FAA/FSDO; Saddle Brook, NJ
Original Publish Date:	April 20, 2020
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=96103

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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](#).