



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	New Bern, North Carolina	Accident Number:	GAA18CA027
Date & Time:	October 21, 2017, 10:30 Local	Registration:	N72552
Aircraft:	Cessna 120	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Loss of control on ground	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot of the tailwheel-equipped airplane reported that, during landing, he believed he "just hit a little to[o] hard," and the airplane porpoised. He added that he attempted to recover but could not get control of the airplane. Subsequently, the airplane exited the runway to the left and nosed over.

The airplane sustained substantial damage to the empennage and the left wing lift strut.

The pilot reported that there were no preaccident mechanical failures or malfunctions 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 improper landing flare and subsequent failure to maintain directional control during landing.

Findings

Aircraft	Directional control - Not attained/maintained
Aircraft	Landing flare - Not attained/maintained
Personnel issues	Aircraft control - Pilot

Factual Information

History of Flight

Landing	Hard landing
Landing	Loss of control on ground (Defining event)
Landing	Runway excursion
Landing	Nose over/nose down

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	63, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	3-point
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	BasicMed Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	May 30, 2017
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	August 10, 2017
Flight Time:	(Estimated) 446 hours (Total, all aircraft), 6 hours (Total, this make and model), 307 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N72552
Model/Series:	120 NO SERIES	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1946	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	9722
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	July 30, 2017 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1450 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	5005.12 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	CONT MOTOR
ELT:	C91A installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	C85 SERIES
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	85 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:	KEWN,24 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	14:51 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	219°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	3 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/ None
Wind Direction:	70°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/ N/A
Altimeter Setting:	30.35 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	22°C / 14°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	WASHINGTON, NC (OCW)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	New Bern, NC (EWN)	Type of Clearance:	VFR
Departure Time:	10:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class D

Airport Information

Airport:	COASTAL CAROLINA REGIONAL EWN	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	18 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	22	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	6453 ft / 150 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Touch and go;Traffic pattern

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:	35.073612,-77.042503(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Swenson, Eric
Additional Participating Persons:	Tim R McQuain; FAA; Greensboro, NC
Original Publish Date:	January 11, 2018
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=96253

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](#).