



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Tallahassee, Florida	Accident Number:	GAA18CA035
Date & Time:	October 27, 2017, 17:50 Local	Registration:	N211W
Aircraft:	Smith AEROSTAR 600A	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Loss of control in flight	Injuries:	3 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot of the multiengine, retractable-landing-gear airplane reported that, during the initial climb, he "noted 105 IAS [indicated airspeed] as normal and reached down to retract the gear." He added that he "glanced down" to make sure he had grabbed the landing gear selector, and when he looked back outside, the airplane was "near the runway." He further added that he "pulled back hard on the yoke," but the propellers struck the runway, and the airplane then settled on the runway and skidded into the grass to the left.

The pilot reported in the National Transportation Safety Board Form 6120.1 Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident/Incident Report Safety Recommendation section that the airplane was "not high enough above [the] ground to raise the gear," and he may have "relaxed back-pressure on the yoke after rotation," and when leaning slightly forward for the gear handle, the yoke may have been pushed forward slightly.

The airplane sustained substantial damage to the fuselage.

The pilot reported that there were no preaccident mechanical malfunctions or failures with the airplane that would have precluded normal operation.

The Federal Aviation Administration's Airplane Flying Handbook stated, in part:

Avoid premature landing gear retraction and do not retract the landing gear until a positive rate of climb is indicated on the flight instruments. If the airplane has not attained a positive rate of climb, there is always the chance it may settle back onto the runway with the gear retracted. This is especially so in cases of premature lift-off. Remember that leaning forward to reach the landing gear selector may result in inadvertent forward pressure on the yoke, which causes the airplane to descend.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

The pilot's incorrect pitch control and premature landing gear retraction during the initial climb.

Findings

Personnel issues	Incorrect action sequence - Pilot
Personnel issues	Aircraft control - Pilot
Aircraft	Pitch control - Incorrect use/operation
Aircraft	Landing gear selector - Incorrect use/operation

Factual Information

History of Flight

Initial climb	Loss of control in flight (Defining event)
Initial climb	Abnormal runway contact
Takeoff-rejected takeoff	Runway excursion

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	57, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	3-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	October 20, 2017
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	October 27, 2016
Flight Time:	(Estimated) 1955 hours (Total, all aircraft), 204 hours (Total, this make and model), 1947 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 42 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 14 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Smith	Registration:	N211W
Model/Series:	AEROSTAR 600A 600	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1977	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	60-0460-153
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	August 11, 2017 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	5500 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	5931.5 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	C126 installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	IO-540-K1J5
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	300 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:	KTLH,83 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	21:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	0°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 2000 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 25000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	7 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/ None
Wind Direction:	180°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/ N/A
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	22°C / 10°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	TALLAHASSEE, FL (TLH)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Destination:	TUSKEGEE, AL (06A)	Type of Clearance:	IFR
Departure Time:	17:50 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class C

Airport Information

Airport:	TALLAHASSEE INTL TLH	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	83 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	09	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	8000 ft / 150 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	2 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 None	Latitude, Longitude:	30.396667,-84.35083(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Gerhardt, Adam
Additional Participating Persons:	Juan Sanchez; FAA/ FSDO; Tampa, FL
Original Publish Date:	February 21, 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=96277

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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](#).