



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	SANTA ROSA, CA	Accident Number:	LAX87FA257
Date & Time:	07/07/1987, 1028 PDT	Registration:	N7485D
Aircraft:	BEECH A60	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE PIC & HIS WIFE PLANNED A 30 MIN PLEASURE FLT TO LAKE TAHOE. PRIOR TO DEPARTURE THE PLT FAILED TO VISUALLY INSPECT THE AMOUNT OF FUEL IN THE RT WING TANK. THE TANK WAS FULL. THE TANK'S CAP PROBABLY APPEARED TO BE SECURED WHEN, IN FACT, BECAUSE OF A UNIQUE DESIGN CHARACTERISTIC, IT WAS MERELY RESTING ON TOP OF THE FILLER NECK. UPON TAKEOFF ROTATION THE CAP CAME OFF THE FILLER NECK & IT WAS FOLLOWED BY A FUEL SPRAY. THE PLT RESPONDED & STAYED IN A VERY LOW ALTITUDE & CLOSE-IN TRAFFIC PATTERN. HE ATTEMPTED TO LAND IMMEDIATELY. HE LOST CONTROL DURING THE TURN TO FINAL, STALLED AND COLLIDED WITH THE PAVEMENT PRIOR TO REACHING THE THRESHOLD.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: PILOT'S FAILURE TO MAINTAIN ADEQUATE AIRSPEED ON FINAL APPROACH WHICH RESULTED IN THE AIRCRAFT STALLING.

Findings

Occurrence #1: MISCELLANEOUS/OTHER
Phase of Operation: STANDING - PRE-FLIGHT

Findings

1. (F) FUEL SYSTEM,CAP - NOT SECURED
 2. (F) AIRCRAFT PREFLIGHT - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
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Occurrence #2: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - FINAL APPROACH

Findings

3. (F) FLUID,FUEL - SIPHONING
 4. (F) PRECAUTIONARY LANDING - ATTEMPTED - PILOT IN COMMAND
 5. (C) EMERGENCY PROCEDURE - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND
 6. (C) AIRSPEED(VSO) - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
 7. (F) STALL - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND
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Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	59, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	04/11/1986
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	5505 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	BEECH	Registration:	N7485D
Model/Series:	A60 A60	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	P-165
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	08/19/1986, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	6775 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:		Engine Model/Series:	TIO-541-E1C4
Registered Owner:	DARLINE J. & J. GERLACH	Rated Power:	380 hp
Operator:	GERLACH, JOHN	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	STS, 125 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	6 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1045 PDT	Direction from Accident Site:	320°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 25000 ft agl	Visibility	25 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None / 0 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	180°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	26° C / 11° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	SANTA ROSA, CA	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	SO. LAKE TAHOE, CA (TVL)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1025 PDT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	SANTA ROSA AIR CENTER (001)	Runway Surface Type:	Concrete
Airport Elevation:	100 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	16	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	7000 ft / 200 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Full Stop; Precautionary Landing; Traffic Pattern

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Fire:	On-Ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	WAYNE POLLACK	Report Date:	11/28/1989
Additional Participating Persons:	R J JONES; OAKLAND, CA JOHN WARD; WICHITA, KS KEN JONES		
Publish Date:			
Investigation Docket:	NTSB accident and incident dockets serve as permanent archival information for the NTSB's investigations. Dockets released prior to June 1, 2009 are publicly available from the NTSB's Record Management Division at pubinq@ntsb.gov , or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/ .		

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