

Brief of Accident

Adopted 12/20/2010

CEN10FA028
File No. 27441 10/26/2009 Benavides, TX Aircraft Reg No. N729MS Time (Local): 11:43 CDT

Make/Model: Beech / B100
Engine Make/Model: Airesearch / TPE331 SERIES
Aircraft Damage: Destroyed
Number of Engines: 2
Operating Certificate(s): None
Type of Flight Operation: Personal
Reg. Flight Conducted Under: Part 91: General Aviation

	Fatal	Serious	Minor/None
Crew	1	0	0
Pass	3	0	0

Last Depart. Point: Uvalde, TX
Destination: Leesburg, FL
Airport Proximity: Off Airport/Airstrip

Condition of Light: Day
Weather Info Src: Weather Observation Facility
Basic Weather: Instrument Conditions
Lowest Ceiling: 700 Ft. AGL, Overcast
Visibility: 3.00 SM
Wind Dir/Speed: 010 / 027 Kts
Temperature (°C): 18
Precip/Obscuration:

Pilot-in-Command Age: 44
Certificate(s)/Rating(s)
Private; Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land

Flight Time (Hours)

Instrument Ratings
Airplane

Total All Aircraft: 550
Last 90 Days: Unk/Nr
Total Make/Model: Unk/Nr
Total Instrument Time: Unk/Nr

*** Note: NTSB investigators either traveled in support of this investigation or conducted a significant amount of investigative work without any travel, and used data obtained from various sources to prepare this aircraft accident report. ***

The pilot obtained three weather briefings before departure. At that time, the current weather along the route of flight showed significant convective activity and a moving squall line, and the forecast predicted significant thunderstorm activity along the planned route of flight. The pilot was concerned about the weather and mentioned that he would be looking for "holes" in the weather to maneuver around via the use of his on-board weather radar. He decided to fly a route further south to avoid the severe weather. Radar data indicates that, after departure, the pilot flew a southerly course that was west of the severe weather before he asked air traffic control for a 150-degree heading that would direct him toward a "hole" in the weather. A controller, who said he also saw a "hole" in the weather, told the pilot to fly a 120-degree heading and proceed direct to a fix along his route of flight. The airplane flew into a line of very heavy to intense thunderstorms during cruise flight at 25,000 feet before the airplane began to lose altitude and reverse course. The airplane then entered a rapid descent, broke up in flight, and subsequently impacted terrain.

Review of recorded precipitation data showed that there was substantial information available to the controller about moderate to extreme weather along the aircraft's route of flight. While the controller stated that he saw a hole or clear area ahead of the aircraft, this is contradicted by both the recorded data and the statement of a second controller working the D-position at the time of the accident. The first controller did not advise the pilot of the severe weather that was along this new course heading and the pilot entered severe

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weather and began to lose altitude. The controller queried the pilot about his altitude loss and the pilot mentioned that they had gotten into some "pretty good turbulence." This was the last communication from the pilot before the airplane disappeared from radar.

Review of recorded precipitation data showed that there was substantial information available to the controller about moderate to extreme weather along the aircraft's route of flight. The controller did not provide advisories to the pilot regarding the adverse weather's immediate safety hazard to the accident flight as required by Federal Aviation Administration Order 7110.65. Examination of the recovered sections of flight control surfaces revealed that all of the fractures examined exhibited signs consistent with overstress failure. There was no evidence of preexisting cracking on any of the fracture surfaces examined and no preaccident anomalies were noted with the engines. Updated at Dec 20 2010 1:32PM

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OCCURRENCES

Enroute-cruise - Windshear or thunderstorm
Enroute-cruise - Loss of control in flight

FINDINGS

Environmental issues-Conditions/weather/phenomena-Convective weather-Thunderstorm-Decision related to condition - C
Personnel issues-Action/decision-Action-Lack of action-Pilot - C
Personnel issues-Action/decision-Action-Lack of action-ATC personnel - C

Findings Legend: (C) = Cause, (F) = Factor

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

The pilot's failure to avoid severe weather, and the air traffic controller's failure to provide adverse weather avoidance assistance, as required by Federal Aviation Administration directives, both of which led to the airplane's encounter with a severe thunderstorm and the subsequent loss of control and inflight breakup of the airplane.