



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	Clovis, NM	Accident Number:	CEN15LA354
Date & Time:	08/09/2015, 0925 MDT	Registration:	N726JB
Aircraft:	CESSNA C421B	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Fuel starvation	Injuries:	1 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The private pilot reported that he was approaching the airport for landing in the multi-engine airplane when both engines began to surge. The pilot attempted to switch to the auxiliary fuel tanks, but inadvertently switched the left engine fuel selector to the off position. The left engine subsequently experienced a total loss of engine power. On final approach for landing, the airplane impacted terrain and was subsequently consumed by a postimpact fire; the fuel onboard the airplane at the time of the accident could not be determined. An examination of the airplane's engines and systems revealed no mechanical anomalies 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 management of fuel to the left engine during approach for landing, which resulted in a total loss of left engine power due to fuel starvation, and his subsequent failure to maintain control during the final landing approach, which resulted in collision with terrain.

Findings

Aircraft	Fuel - Fluid management (Cause)
Personnel issues	Incorrect action performance - Pilot (Cause) Aircraft control - Pilot (Cause)

Factual Information

On August 9, 2015, at 0925 mountain daylight time, a Cessna 421B, N726JB, impacted terrain following a loss of left engine power during final approach for landing on runway 12 at Clovis Municipal Airport (CVN), Clovis, New Mexico. The pilot received serious injuries and the airplane sustained substantial damage. The airplane was registered to and operated by the pilot under 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91 personal flight that was not operating on a flight plan. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of accident. The flight originated from a private airstrip near Melrose, New Mexico, and was destined to CVN.

A completed National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident/Incident Report Form 6120.1 was not received from the pilot, as required by Part 830.5, by either the NTSB Investigator-In-Charge or Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Coordinator for the accident.

Witness stated that they heard the airplane engines "popping" as it approached and entered the traffic pattern. The airplane left wing contacted terrain short of runway 12 and the airplane cartwheeled. A post-impact fire occurred and the wings and fuselage were severely damaged.

The pilot provided a limited statement to the FAA Coordinator, in which he stated he had ample fuel for the short flight from a private ranch in Melrose, New Mexico to CVN (30 miles to the east), when both engines began to surge. The pilot stated he attempted to switch both tanks to Auxiliary but inadvertently switched the left fuel selector to Off. The left engine experienced a total loss of engine power. The pilot said he was too high to land on runway 22 and attempted to land on runway 12. However, the airplane impacted terrain approximately 1,000 feet southeast of the runway 12/22 intersection between runway 12 and the parallel taxiway. The aircraft was traveling southeast attempting to land on runway 12 before losing control.

An examination of the wreckage was conducted by an FAA inspector and the total amount of fuel onboard the airplane at the time of the accident could not be determined due to post impact damage and fire. No anomalies were noted with the airframe or engines that would have precluded normal operation.

History of Flight

Approach	Fuel starvation (Defining event) Loss of engine power (total)
Approach-VFR pattern final	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	65, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 With Waivers/Limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	02/11/2015
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	3700 hours (Total, all aircraft), 300 hours (Total, this make and model), 20 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	CESSNA	Registration:	N726JB
Model/Series:	C421B	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1970	Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	421B0020
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	07/22/2015, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	7250 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:		Engine Model/Series:	GTSIO-520-H
Registered Owner:	Pilot	Rated Power:	375 hp
Operator:	Pilot	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	CVN, 4216 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	0915 MDT	Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	14 knots / 19 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	250°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.1 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	27° C / 16° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Melrose, NM (PVT)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Clovis, NM (CVN)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	0825 MDT	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	Clovis Municipal Airport (CVN)	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	4216 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Unknown
Runway Used:	12	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	5697 ft / 150 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Full Stop; Traffic Pattern

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	On-Ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Serious	Latitude, Longitude:	34.426667, -103.077500 (est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Mitchell F Gallo	Report Date:	03/19/2018
Additional Participating Persons:	Gordon Morris; Federal Aviation Administration; Lubbock FSDO; Lubbock, TX		
Publish Date:	03/19/2018		
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.		
Investigation Docket:	http://dms.ntsb.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=91768		

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The Independent Safety Board Act, as codified at 49 U.S.C. Section 1154(b), precludes the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an incident or accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report. A factual report that may be admissible under 49 U.S.C. § 1154(b) is available [here](#).