



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	GORDONSVILLE, VA	Accident Number:	BF087LA049
Date & Time:	07/22/1987, 0930 EDT	Registration:	N9764J
Aircraft:	CESSNA 421	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE PLT BEGAN TAKING OFF FROM A DOWNWARD SLOPING, 2300 FT RWY IN LIGHT WINDS. THE RPRTD TEMP WAS 92 DEG; THE DENSITY ALT WAS ABOUT 2500 FT. THE PLT RPRTD THE ACFT ACCELERATED NORMALLY TO V₁ SPEED; HOWEVER, IT HIT THE TOPS OF TREES ABOUT 350 TO 500 FT BEYOND THE RWY, THEN STRUCK THE GROUND AFTER TRAVELING ABOUT ANOTHER 1000 FT. PERFORMANCE CHARTS SHOWED THE ACFT WOULD HAVE NEEDED A TAKEOFF DISTANCE OF 2200 FT TO CLEAR A 50 FT OBSTACLE IN CALM WIND. THE PLT RPRTD THE WIND WAS FROM 010 DEG AT 3 TO 5 KTS. A WITNESS RPRTD A 3 TO 5 KT TAILWIND. NO PREIMPACT PART FAILURE OR MALFUNCTION WAS FND.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings

1. (C) PREFLIGHT PLANNING/PREPARATION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - HIGH DENSITY ALTITUDE
3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - UNFAVORABLE WIND
4. (F) OBJECT - TREE(S)
5. PROPER ALTITUDE - NOT ATTAINED

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	42, 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:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	03/25/1986
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	1723 hours (Total, all aircraft), 201 hours (Total, this make and model), 1578 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 116 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 30 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	CESSNA	Registration:	N9764J
Model/Series:	421 421	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	421-0028
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	01/24/1987, 100 Hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	6800 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	1975 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	CONTINENTAL
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	GTSIO-520-D
Registered Owner:	D & F INVESTMENTS	Rated Power:	375 hp
Operator:	DONALD A. HENKE	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	, 0 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	0000	Direction from Accident Site:	0°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear / 0 ft agl	Visibility	50 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None / 0 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	Variable	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	33° C / 21° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	(GVE)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	0000	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	GORDONSVILLE MUNI (GVE)	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	454 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	4	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	2300 ft / 40 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	AL DICKINSON	Report Date:	01/11/1989
Additional Participating Persons:			
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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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](#).