

Brief of Accident

Adopted 10/04/2012

ERA12LA453
File No. 30152 07/15/2012 North Myrtle Beach ,SC Aircraft Reg No. N8048D Time (Local): 09:00 EDT

Make/Model: Piper/PA-18-150
Engine Make/Model: Lycoming / O-320-B2B
Aircraft Damage: Substantial
Number of Engines: 1
Operating Certificate(s): None
Type of Flight Operation: Banner Tow
Reg. Flight Conducted Under: Part 91: General Aviation

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

Last Depart. Point: Same as Accident/Incident Location
Destination: Local Flight, SC
Airport Proximity: On Airport/Airstrip
Airport Name: Grand Strand Airport
Runway Identification: N/A
Runway Length/Width (Ft): Unk/Nr
Runway Surface:
Runway Surface Condition:

Condition of Light: Day
Weather Info Src: Weather Observation Facility
Basic Weather: Visual Conditions
Lowest Ceiling: None
Visibility: 10.00 SM
Wind Dir/Speed: 030 / 003 kts
Temperature (°C): 23
Precip/Obscuration: No Obscuration; No Precipitation

Pilot-in-Command Age: 24

Flight Time (Hours)

Certificate(s)/Rating(s)
Flight Instructor; Commercial; Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land; Glider

Total All Aircraft: 783
Last 90 Days: 222
Total Make/Model: 260
Total Instrument Time: Unk/Nr

Instrument Ratings
Airplane

*** Note: NTSB investigators may not have traveled in support of this investigation and used data provided by various sources to prepare this aircraft accident report. ***

The pilot stated that he was conducting a banner-tow flight; he turned on final approach at 300 feet above ground level (agl) and reduced the power to the idle position. His airspeed was between 60 and 70 mph. The carburetor heat was not activated, which the pilot indicated was company policy. The company refuted the pilot's statement regarding carburetor heat. The airplane descended to about 10 feet agl and was 50 feet from the banner pick up poles. He added full power and noticed that the rpm was at 2,500, which was 100 rpm less than full power. He pitched the nose up and the airplane climbed to about 200 feet. The rpm continued to decrease to 1500 rpm. The pilot lowered the nose and checked the throttle, and it was full forward. He increased the mixture, and there was no change in rpm. The airplane would not maintain altitude, and he informed the tower that he was going down. He reduced the throttle to the idle position and lowered the flaps to the full down position. He made a forced landing beyond the banner tow grass area, clearing a berm and colliding with the airport perimeter fence. The airplane nosed over and came to a complete stop and the engine stopped running. The pilot turned the fuel off at the fuel selector valve. The pilot stated that he did not experience any mechanical problems with the airframe or flight controls before the accident. A carburetor icing chart indicated that the airplane was at risk of serious icing at glide power given the weather conditions at the time of the accident.

Updated at Oct 4 2012 1:10PM

Brief of Accident (Continued)

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OCCURRENCES

Maneuvering - Loss of engine power (partial)
Emergency descent - Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

FINDINGS

Personnel issues-Task performance-Use of equip/info-Use of equip/system-Pilot - C
Environmental issues-Conditions/weather/phenomena-Temp/humidity/pressure-Conducive to carburetor icing-Effect on equipment
Environmental issues-Physical environment-Object/animal/substance-Fence/fence post-Contributed to outcome

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

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident as follows:
The pilot's inadequate use of carburetor heat during cruise flight, which resulted in a partial loss of engine power and subsequent forced landing.