



AVIATION



HIGHWAY



MARINE



RAILROAD



PIPELINE

Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Lafe, Arkansas	Accident Number:	CEN19LA116
Date & Time:	April 2, 2019, 17:32 Local	Registration:	N265GB
Aircraft:	BERKEY S-6ES	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Controlled flight into terr/obj (CFIT)	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The noncertificated pilot reported that, while on approach for landing at the private turf runway, he was "blinded by the sun" and allowed the airplane to descend too low. The tailwheel hit vines growing near the runway, and the left wing subsequently impacted the ground, resulting in substantial damage. The pilot reported that there were no mechanical failures or malfunctions of the airplane and added that the accident may have been prevented by landing at a different time or by clearing the vegetation around the runway.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

The non-certificated pilot's failure to maintain an appropriate glidepath while landing toward the sun, which resulted in impact with vegetation and a subsequent loss of control.

Findings

Aircraft	Descent/approach/glide path - Not attained/maintained
Personnel issues	Aircraft control - Pilot
Environmental issues	Glare - Contributed to outcome
Personnel issues	Qualification/certification - Pilot

Factual Information

History of Flight

Approach-VFR pattern final	Controlled flight into terr/obj (CFIT) (Defining event)
Uncontrolled descent	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

On April 2, 2019, about 1732 central daylight time, an experimental, amateur-built Berkey S-6ES airplane, impacted vegetation on final approach at a private turf airstrip near Lafe, Arkansas. The pilot was not injured and the airplane was substantially damaged. The airplane was registered to and operated by the pilot as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 personal flight. Day visual meteorological conditions prevailed for the flight, which was not operated on a flight plan. The flight originated from the Blytheville Municipal Airport (HKA), Blytheville, Arkansas, about 1700. The private airstrip was the intended destination.

The pilot reported that he was relocating the airplane from HKA to be based at the private airstrip which was closer to his home. He made one low pass over the field before returning to land. On final approach, he was "blinded by [the] sun" and the tailwheel hit vines growing near the airstrip which caused the airplane to stall. The left wing struck the ground resulting the substantial damage. In addition, the left main landing gear and propeller were damaged during the hard landing. The pilot noted that there were no mechanical failures or malfunctions associated with the airplane. He added that the accident might have been prevented by either landing at a later time so that the sun would not have "blinded" him or by clearing the vegetation near the runway to ground level.

Information received from the Federal Aviation Administration indicated that the pilot did not hold a current pilot or medical certificate at the time of the accident. The pilot was initially issued a combined third-class medical and student pilot certificate in August 1994 by an aviation medical examiner. However, upon further review by the FAA, additional information unrelated to any medical deficiency was requested from the pilot. When the requested information was not received, the pilot was determined to be ineligible for a medical certificate and the application was denied. No other medical or pilot certificate applications were on file.

The airplane was issued an experimental airworthiness certificate and met the requirements for operation as a light sport airplane. Regulations required pilot and medical certification in order to operate the airplane. Specifically, any individual operating a light sport airplane must hold a sport pilot or higher level of certification, or a current student pilot certificate with the applicable endorsements. In addition, a light sport airplane may be operated based on a valid driver's license provided the pilot was determined to be eligible for a medical certificate at the time of his/her most recent application, and not had his/her most recently issued medical certificate suspended or revoked. Because the pilot did not hold a current pilot certificate, nor did he meet the medical certification requirements, he was not legally authorized to act as pilot-in-command of the airplane at the time of the accident.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	None	Age:	61,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	3-point
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	None None	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	82 hours (Total, all aircraft), 82 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 0.5 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 0 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	BERKEY	Registration:	N265GB
Model/Series:	S-6ES	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1999	Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental (Special)	Serial Number:	04991312
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	October 2, 2013 Condition	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1320 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	5224 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	Rotax
ELT:	C91A installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	912
Registered Owner:		Rated Power:	80 Horsepower
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	4M9,293 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	13 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	17:15 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	337°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	14 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	200°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.09 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	20°C / 3°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Blytheville, AR (HKA)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Lafe, AR (PVT)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	17:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	Private PVT	Runway Surface Type:	Grass/turf
Airport Elevation:	340 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry;Rough
Runway Used:	27	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	1200 ft / 40 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Full stop;Traffic pattern

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	36.204444,-90.548889

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Sorensen, Timothy		
Additional Participating Persons:	Nathan Bradshaw; FAA Flight Standards; Little Rock, AR		
Original Publish Date:	January 28, 2021	Investigation Class:	3
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.		
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=99219		

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), established in 1967, is an independent federal agency mandated by Congress through the Independent Safety Board Act of 1974 to investigate transportation accidents, determine the probable causes of the accidents, issue safety recommendations, study transportation safety issues, and evaluate the safety effectiveness of government agencies involved in transportation. The NTSB makes public its actions and decisions through accident reports, safety studies, special investigation reports, safety recommendations, and statistical reviews.

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](#).