



AVIATION



HIGHWAY



MARINE



RAILROAD



PIPELINE

Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Colby, Kansas	Accident Number:	CEN19LA086
Date & Time:	February 22, 2019, 09:45 Local	Registration:	N62069
Aircraft:	Beech 65	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Sys/Comp malf/fail (non-power)	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Positioning		

Analysis

Shortly after takeoff, the pilot noticed that the crew hatch door, located next to the left front seat, had unexpectedly opened. The pilot attempted to close the door without success. He indicated that, while trying to close the door, he "wasn't able to fully control the airplane normally (mainly [in] heading and pitch)," so he initiated a precautionary landing back to the departure airport. While maneuvering at a low altitude to stay in visual flight rules conditions (overcast ceiling at 300 ft), the airplane's airspeed decreased, the wing tips were dipping back and forth, and the airplane exhibited signs of nearing its critical angle of attack. The pilot retracted the landing gear and applied full engine power to try to gain airspeed. The pilot was unable to gain airspeed, and the airplane was losing altitude. Before impact, the pilot kept the wings level and the nose in a slight pitch-up attitude. The airplane then impacted the snow-covered terrain with the landing gear retracted, which resulted in substantial damage to the left wing and aileron. Postaccident examination of the airplane revealed no preimpact malfunctions with the crew hatch door; thus, it is likely the door had not been properly secured before takeoff.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

The pilot's failure to properly secure the crew hatch door before takeoff, which resulted in his distraction and his failure to maintain airplane control and airspeed.

Findings

Personnel issues	Use of equip/system - Pilot
Personnel issues	Attention - Pilot
Personnel issues	Aircraft control - Pilot
Aircraft	Airspeed - Not attained/maintained
Aircraft	Altitude - Not attained/maintained

Factual Information

History of Flight

Takeoff	Sys/Comp malf/fail (non-power) (Defining event)
Emergency descent	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

On February 22, 2019, about 0945 central standard time, a Beech 65 airplane, N62069, impacted terrain near Colby, Kansas, while maneuvering for a precautionary landing. The commercial pilot was not injured, and the airplane sustained substantial damage. The airplane was registered to and operated by Bemidji Aviation Services, Inc., as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 positioning flight. Day instrument meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the accident, and an instrument flight rules flight plan was filed. The flight was originating from Shalz Field Airport (CBK), Colby, Kansas, and destined for Denver, Colorado.

According to the pilot, shortly after takeoff, he noticed the crew hatch door, located next to the left front seat, had unexpectedly opened. The pilot attempted to close the door, without success. While focusing on trying to close the door, the pilot "wasn't able to fully control the airplane normally (mainly [in] heading and pitch)," so he initiated a precautionary landing back to CBK. While maneuvering at a low altitude to stay in visual flight rules conditions (overcast ceiling at 300 ft), the airplane's airspeed decreased, and the wing tips were dipping back and forth. The pilot retracted the landing gear and applied full engine power to try and gain airspeed. The pilot was unable to gain airspeed, the airplane was losing altitude, and he knew the airplane was going to impact terrain. Prior to the impact, the pilot kept the wings level, and the nose in a slightly pitch up attitude. The airplane then impacted the snow-covered terrain with the landing gear retracted.

Postaccident examination of the airplane by the operator revealed the left wing and left aileron were bent. No evidence was noted that the crew hatch door malfunctioned during the flight.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Flight instructor	Age:	27,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	3-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane multi-engine; Airplane single-engine; Instrument airplane	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	January 28, 2019
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	February 18, 2019
Flight Time:	(Estimated) 2550 hours (Total, all aircraft), 34 hours (Total, this make and model), 2444 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Beech	Registration:	N62069
Model/Series:	65	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1962	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	62-3866
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	January 29, 2019 Continuous airworthiness	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	8000 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	8877 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	C126 installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	IA-720-A1B
Registered Owner:		Rated Power:	400 Horsepower
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument (IMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	CBK,3187 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	1 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	09:55 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	1.25 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 200 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	10 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	None / None
Wind Direction:	130°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	N/A / N/A
Altimeter Setting:	29.95 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	-1°C / -1°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	Light - None - Drizzle		
Departure Point:	Colby, KS (CBK)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Destination:	Denver, CO (DEN)	Type of Clearance:	IFR
Departure Time:	09:45 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class E

Airport Information

Airport:	Shalz Field Airport CBK	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	3187 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Unknown
Runway Used:		IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	Precautionary landing

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:	39.427223,-101.05278(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Sauer, Aaron
Additional Participating Persons:	Keith Allen; FAA; Wichita, KS
Original Publish Date:	August 10, 2020
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=99027

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](#).