



AVIATION



HIGHWAY



MARINE



RAILROAD



PIPELINE

Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Wasilla, Alaska	Accident Number:	ANC23LA058
Date & Time:	August 1, 2023, 15:15 Local	Registration:	N907AX
Aircraft:	CORT J NEUMAN APEX	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Ground collision	Injuries:	2 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot stated that he planned to take the passenger on a local sightseeing flight. During takeoff from the 1,600 ft. long gravel-covered runway, the airplane performed as expected until reaching about 50 ft above ground level (agl), at which point the climb performance degraded significantly. He observed no change in engine performance or weather conditions. As the airplane neared the end of the runway, he realized that he would not be able to pass over the trees that bordered the airport and attempted to maintain direction control avoiding a heading to the larger trees. The airplane collided with the trees sustaining substantial damage to the wings and fuselage. The pilot reported that there were no preimpact mechanical failures or malfunctions with the airplane 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 failure to maintain clearance during takeoff, which resulted in impact with trees.

Findings

Aircraft	Climb rate - Capability exceeded
Personnel issues	Decision making/judgment - Pilot

Factual Information

History of Flight

Takeoff	Ground collision (Defining event)
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Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline transport; Military	Age:	59,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	3-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	March 9, 2023
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	February 14, 2023
Flight Time:	12200 hours (Total, all aircraft), 131 hours (Total, this make and model), 2500 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 60 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 60 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 0.2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Passenger Information

Certificate:		Age:	Male
Airplane Rating(s):		Seat Occupied:	Rear
Other Aircraft Rating(s):		Restraint Used:	3-point
Instrument Rating(s):		Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):		Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:		Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:			

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	CORT J NEUMAN	Registration:	N907AX
Model/Series:	APEX	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	2022	Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental (Special)	Serial Number:	1
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	April 6, 2023 Continuous airworthiness	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2300 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	31 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	100 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	Custom Aircraft Inc
ELT:	C126 installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-360-C1G EXP
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	180 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:	PAAQ, 233 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	6 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	15:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	132°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	6 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	None / None
Wind Direction:	250°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	N/A / N/A
Altimeter Setting:	30.07 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	24°C / 14°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Wasilla, AK	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Wasilla, AK	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	High Ridge Association Airport 97AK	Runway Surface Type:	Gravel
Airport Elevation:	720 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	080	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	1800 ft / 150 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	61.66428,-149.25469

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Ward, Mark

Additional Participating Persons: Andy Flack; FAA

Original Publish Date: February 1, 2024

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class 4](#)

Note: The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=192778>

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant events in other modes of transportation—railroad, transit, highway, marine, pipeline, and commercial space. We determine the probable causes of the accidents and events we investigate, and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future occurrences. In addition, we conduct transportation safety research studies and offer information and other assistance to family members and survivors for each accident or event we investigate. We also serve as the appellate authority for enforcement actions involving aviation and mariner certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and US Coast Guard, and we adjudicate appeals of civil penalty actions taken by the FAA.

The NTSB does not assign fault or blame for an accident or incident; rather, as specified by NTSB regulation, “accident/incident investigations are fact-finding proceedings with no formal issues and no adverse parties ... and are not conducted for the purpose of determining the rights or liabilities of any person” (Title 49 *Code of Federal Regulations* section 831.4). Assignment of fault or legal liability is not relevant to the NTSB’s statutory mission to improve transportation safety by investigating accidents and incidents and issuing safety recommendations. In addition, statutory language prohibits the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report (Title 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b)). A factual report that may be admissible under 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b) is available [here](#).