



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	Soledad, CA	<b>Accident Number:</b>	LAX08CA034
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	12/06/2007, 1030 PST	<b>Registration:</b>	N6024M
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Air Tractor AT-401	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Serious
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 137: Agricultural		

## Analysis

The pilot was seeding an area located adjacent to mountainous terrain. Prior to making the first pass, he had flown a reconnaissance flight to inspect the area. After completion of the first pass as he was maneuvering in a turn back towards the field, he was checking the seeding pattern and making adjustments to the GPS system inside the cockpit. When he checked the gauges again, he realized that the airplane had lost airspeed and rolled out to a wings level configuration to regain the lost airspeed. The airplane was headed towards rising terrain. He jettisoned the remaining seed and made a controlled collision with terrain in a ravine. The airplane was destroyed in a post impact fire. He reported that he had preoccupied himself with less important flight duties at a critical time during the flight. The pilot reported no mechanical problems 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 an adequate clearance from mountainous terrain while maneuvering during an aerial application mission. Contributing to the accident was the pilot's diverted attention inside the cockpit.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER  
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING - AERIAL APPLICATION

### Findings

1. TERRAIN CONDITION - MOUNTAINOUS/HILLY
2. (C) IN-FLIGHT PLANNING/DECISION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (F) DIVERTED ATTENTION - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (C) CLEARANCE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

## Factual Information

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	40, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine Land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Center
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	Helicopter	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 2	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	10/01/2007
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>		<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	10/01/2007
<b>Flight Time:</b>	11000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 240 hours (Total, this make and model), 10740 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 300 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 40 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Air Tractor	<b>Registration:</b>	N6024M
<b>Model/Series:</b>	AT-401	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	No
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Restricted	<b>Serial Number:</b>	401-0949
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Tailwheel	<b>Seats:</b>	1
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>		<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	9000 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>		<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>		<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Pratt & Whitney
<b>ELT:</b>		<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	R1340
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	US Bancorp Equipment Finance Inc.	<b>Rated Power:</b>	600 hp
<b>Operator:</b>	SOILSERV INC	<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	
<b>Operator Does Business As:</b>		<b>Operator Designator Code:</b>	LSHG

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	Calm /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	10° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	KING CITY, CA (KIC)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	(KIC)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1015 PST	Type of Airspace:	

## Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	On-Ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	
Total Injuries:	1 Serious	Latitude, Longitude:	36.374167, -121.414167

## Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Tealeye C Cornejo	Report Date:	01/31/2008
Additional Participating Persons:	David Witt; Federal Aviation Administration; San Jose, CA		
Publish Date:			
Note:	This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.		
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 <a href="mailto:pubinquiry@ntsb.gov">pubinquiry@ntsb.gov</a> , or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at <a href="http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/">http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/</a> .		

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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](#).