

EAA CHAPTER 1445
AUGUST AVIATION ACCIDENT SUMMARY
by Jim Timm
Arizona Pilots Association

The following are the NTSB reports of aviation accidents that have occurred in Arizona from June, thru late July. APA will use this detailed accident information to develop safety programs, briefings, and posters/flyers that would help pilots learn from the mistakes being made by others, and take the action necessary to prevent them from having similar accidents.

Aviation safety in this past reporting period has again, not been very good. We had just three accidents that had been reported in this past reporting period with one of them resulting in a fatality. This report covers these three accidents, and three other accidents that have had their preliminary, or factual reports released by the NTSB in this past reporting period, for a total of six reports.

In spite of all the suggestions for everyone to stay home, and avoiding crowds, going to the airport and going flying is certainly avoiding crowds. Hopefully, while flying, nobody ever gets closer than 500 feet of you. Using self serving fueling, and even off the fuel truck, you don't have to come in close contact with anyone during your flying activity. Besides, we need to go flying to keep current, and keep our skills up. So, please to be extra cautious and safe, and don't do anything that would add to this report.

THE FOLLOWING ACCIDENTS OCCURRED IN THE PAST REPORTING PERIOD

This accident occurred in mid May, and the Factual Report just came out in late July.

Accident Date: May 16, 2020

Factual Report Dated: July 20, 2020

Title 14 CFR Part 91

Location: Buckeye

Aircraft Type: TANARG Air Creation (Weight Shift Trike)

Injuries: 1 serious

PILOT CAME IN CONTACT WITH THE MOVING PROP ON THE GROUND

The accident pilot had been performing touch and go landings with several trike pilots when he decided to land and talk to another trike pilot on the ground. After landing and setting the parking brake, he exited his trike with the engine still running, to go talk to the other pilot. When he returned to his trike, it had started to move, and he chased after it. As he neared the trike, he attempted to reach around to the right rear strut with his left hand, to stop it. However, the pilot did not see the rear mounted propeller, and his left-hand fingers were struck by the propeller and he was seriously injured.

The occurrence of the following two accidents were contained in the last report. The following are the recently released details of each accident.

Accident Date: June 9, 2020
Preliminary Report: July 8, 2020
Title 14 CFR Part 91
Location: Safford
Aircraft Type: Vans Wilson RV4
Injuries: 1 Fatal

CONTROLLED FLIGHT INTO TERRAIN

On June 9, 2020, about 0845 MST, an experimental amateur-built Wilson (Vans Aircraft) RV4 was substantially damaged when it was involved in an accident near Safford Regional Airport (SAD). The pilot was fatally injured.

Preliminary ADS-B data revealed the airplane departing from runway 11R at Tucson International Airport (TUS) on a personal flight about 0810, and initiating a climbing left turn to the northeast. The airplane continued on the same track, reaching an altitude of about 9,800 ft mean sea level (msl), about 7 minutes later. For the next 25 minutes, the airplane maintained the same general altitude and heading while traversing the mountain passes northeast of Tucson, and maintaining terrain clearance of between 4,000 and 7,000 ft above ground level.

About 0836, 28 miles southwest of SAD, the airplane began to descend at a rate of about 500 ft per minute (fpm). Seven minutes later, the airplane changed track to the north, toward SAD, with an accompanying reduction in groundspeed from 165 to 115 knots and an increase in descent rate to about 800 fpm. After arriving about 1 mile south of the approach end of runway 30, at an altitude of 4,200 ft, the airplane turned 10° to the left, and began a 4,000-fpm descent that lasted about 12 seconds.

The first identified point of impact consisted of a 25-ft long ground disruption located at an elevation of 3,090 ft, about 500 ft north of the last ADS-B target, and 1/2 mile southwest of the runway 30 threshold. The disruption was on a south-facing bluff, and projected uphill on a north heading toward the main wreckage. The ensuing 300-ft long debris field contained fragments of wing tip, main landing gear, the propeller and exhaust pipe assembly, and the left aileron.

The main wreckage came to rest 40 ft above the first point of impact, and 40 ft below the runway elevation.

Accident Date: June 9, 2020
Preliminary Report: July 8, 2020
Title 14 CFR Part 91
Location: Maricopa (A39)
Aircraft Type: Zenair CH601 HDS
Injuries: 1 Fatal

CONTROLLED FLIGHT INTO TERRAIN

On June 9, 2020, about 2023 MST, an experimental amateur-built Duane B Evans (Zenith) CH601HDS was destroyed when it was involved in an accident near Ak-Chin Regional Airport (A39). The pilot was fatally injured.

The pilot was based out of Phoenix Deer Valley Airport (DVT). According to the pilot's wife, he often flew at night because he enjoyed observing and photographing the night sky, and A39 was typically where he refueled the airplane.

Preliminary ADS-B data revealed that the accident airplane departed DVT on a personal flight about 1958, and flew directly south-southeast toward the Class B airspace of Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport (PHX). The pilot then requested a transition through PHX Class B airspace, and was given clearance by air traffic controllers to enter the airspace and maintain an altitude of 4,500 ft.

By 2013, the airplane had cleared the airspace to the south, and continued on a direct track toward A39. At 2021, it reached A39 and proceeded to fly directly over the airport at an altitude of 2,000 ft msl (650 ft agl). Over the next two minutes, the airplane began a sweeping 1.25-mile radius left turn during which time it climbed to about 2,175 ft, and descended back down to 1,700 ft. The last recorded target indicated that the airplane was at an altitude of 1,700 ft, about 250 ft south of the 1,735 ft peak of an isolated butte, about 2 miles east of the approach end of runway 22.

The wreckage was located on the southeast face of the butte, about 10 ft below the peak. Video footage, recorded from a security camera 0.75 miles south of the accident site, revealed that the airplane flew directly over the camera location and toward the butte. As the airplane approached the butte, its landing lights briefly illuminated the peak, just before the airplane impacted.

A pilot flying a Piper PA28 airplane was also inbound to A39 about the time of the accident. He reported that he was just ahead of the Zenith as they both transitioned through the Class B airspace, and that he could see the airplane on his ADS-B receiver, and heard the pilot talking to air traffic controllers. He stated that both he and the pilot of the Zenith communicated their positions to each other throughout the approach.

The PA28 pilot stated that he overflew the airport about 300 ft above the pattern altitude, with the intention of joining the left traffic pattern for runway 22. As he joined the downwind leg, he could see the Zenith fly over the runway in trail, but well below the pattern altitude. He was concerned that he needed to give the Zenith space to land, so he cut the downwind leg short, and as he turned onto final, he heard the pilot of the Zenith reporting he was on the base leg. He could see the lights of the Zenith in the distance, and was still concerned that it was too low.

After landing, the pilot of the PA28 taxied to the fuel island in anticipation of watching the Zenith land. He could not see or hear an airplane in the pattern, so became concerned and called Flight Service to report the airplane as missing. He described the conditions during the landing approach as very dark, with just a faint hint of blue on the horizon by the time he landed. He stated that the desert area surrounding the airport to the east was unpopulated, generally unlit, and ground features and terrain were not visible.

In Maricopa on the day of the accident, sunset and the end of civil twilight occurred at 1935 and 2005 respectively.

The accident pilot's wife stated that he carried a SPOT tracking device in the airplane, so she could monitor his location. On the night of the accident, he had not returned home by midnight (which was not unusual), so she checked the SPOT device, which indicated that his last location was about 2 miles east of A39, at 2022.

Accident Date: June 16, 2020
Factual Report Dated: June 29, 2020
Title 14 CFR Part 91
Location: Maricopa (A39)
Aircraft Type: Cessna P210
Injuries: 1 Uninjured

FAILURE TO LOWER LANDING GEAR FOR LANDING

The pilot reported that he elected to conduct a straight in approach to the runway. As the airplane descended the air became increasingly turbulent and windy. While on final approach he conducted his pre-landing check as the airplane was bouncing around. During short final, the pilot noted that he was often increasing and decreasing power to account for the windy conditions. As the airplane flared, he heard the gear horn, but it was too late to go-around. The airplane subsequently landed with the landing gear inadvertently retracted and slide to a stop on its belly. The airplane's lower fuselage was substantially damaged. The pilot reported that there were no mechanical anomalies with the airframe or engine that would have precluded normal operation.

The pilot further reported that he omitted extending the landing gear, verifying for a green light or visually checking the mirrors.

THE FOLLOWING TWO ACCIDENTS HAD ALSO OCCURRED IN THIS REPORTING PERIOD.

Accident Date: July 5, 2020
Preliminary Report: July 6, 2020
Title 14 CFR Part 91
Location: Sedona
Aircraft Type: Beech 23
Injuries: Unreported

The NTSB Preliminary Report has not been released for review.

Per the Aviation Safety network; following a loss of engine power shortly after takeoff, the aircraft force landed on State Route 86A near Sedona Airport (SEZ). The airplane sustained substantial damage and the two people onboard were not injured.

The following accident has not yet been acknowledged by the NTSB

Accident Date: July 7, 2020

Location: Payson

Aircraft Type: Bell UH-1H Iroquois

Injuries: 1 Fatality

Per the Aviation Safety Network, the Bell UH-1H Iroquois helicopter impacted the ground in the Tonto National Forest, near Payson, while performing long-line cargo delivery operations in support of fire suppression ops under contract to the US Forest Service.