OCTOBER ACCIDENT & INCIDENT SUMMARY

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The following are the reports of aviation accidents, and incidents that have occurred in Arizona from late September, thru October. APA will be using this detailed 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 occurrences.

Aviation safety this past reporting period was not good because of the number of fatalities, serious injuries, and number of accidents that had occurred. While there were six accidents in this past reporting period, there are two accidents in the beginning of this report that were covered in last month's report minus detailed information. Since then, detailed NTSB reports have become available, and are included in this report.

The following is the information obtained from the ASN, FAA, NTSB, and from APA members.

Date: September 12, 2021
Info. Source: ASN, FAA, NTSB
Location: Lake Havasu
Type: Cessna 177RG
Injuries: 1 Fatality

CRASHED SHORTLY AFTER TAKEOFF

The pilot was planning on making a long cross-country to Reno, Nevada in the next several days, and the purpose of the accident trip was for him to get fuel at Lake Havasu for the flight to Reno. The airplane was based at Eagle Airpark in Bullhead City. The pilot landed at Lake Havasu about 1545, and purchased 24.8 gallons of fuel at the self-serve fuel tank which presumably topped-off the fuel tanks to full fuel onboard, as he had intended, for the anticipated trip.

Based on video, and audio recordings, flight track info, ADS-B data, and witnesses reports, the airplane was observed to takeoff down the runway at a slow groundspeed, and noted that the engine sounded rough as though it was only making partial power. The airplane did not climb as expected, and veered to the right of the runway centerline reaching 100-150 feet agl. The ADS-B data shows the airplane accelerating down the runway up to a derived airspeed of 65 kts. The airplane then pitched up to a nose-high attitude and made an aggressive left bank, consistent with the pilot attempting to make a 180-degree turn back to the runway. Witnesses observed the airplane's wingspan turn nearly perpendicular to the horizon, and then stall with the left wing dropping toward the terrain. At an undetermined time during the takeoff, the pilot made a transmission on the airport common frequency where he stated, "Lake Havasu traffic, Cardinal 2085Q making a uh…". The next transmission was less than a second, and all that could be heard is a high-pitch tone akin to a stall-warning horn.

The accident site was located in the desert terrain about 830 ft from the end of runway 14 at an elevation of 790 feel msl. In character, the terrain was composed of dry, soft dirt with sparse brush, and the wreckage was found distributed over a 200 ft distance. The main wreckage consisted of a majority of the airframe and engine, which had been consumed by fire with the exception of the right wing.

As part of the post-accident examination, a majority of the engine and its respective components were completely disassembled , and significant wear, broken piston rings, scuffing, spalling, pitting, and galling of parts was noted.

Date: September 22, 2021
Info. Source: ASN, NTSB
Location: Page
Type: Piper PA28R-200
Injuries: 1 Fatal, 1 Serious Injury

CONTROLLED FLIGHT INTO TERRAIN

Automatic Dependent Surveillance Broadcast (ADS-B) data obtained from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) captured the airplane's climb out of its departure airport in San Martin, California, to a cruise altitude of about 12,000 ft msl, and a subsequent turn to the south. Later, at about 30 nm west of Page Municipal Airport (PGA), the final ADS-B data point was captured when the airplane was 200 ft agl, and about 0.5 nm northwest of the accident site. The airplane was located about 11 nm west of PGA on a mesa at an elevation of about 6,150 ft msl. The airplane came to rest at a level attitude, and the first point of impact (FPI) was identified by a 12-foot-tall Juniper tree, and several broken tree branches. A debris path was marked by parallel ground scars that began about 20 ft forward of the FPI. The outboard right stabilator was located on the left side of the debris path. The main wreckage marked the end of the debris path and was located 62 ft beyond the FPI. The nose and main landing gear had collapsed, and the fuselage was flush with the ground. Both wings remained attached to the fuselage, the left wing displayed a large compression wrinkle about midspan at the leading edge, and the top skin. The inboard section of the right wing exhibited compression wrinkles about midspan. Both wings were punctured inboard above the right and left main landing gear. The cowling and engine were displaced slightly downward, and the engine had separated from the upper mounts. The three propeller blades were damaged, and remained attached to the engine at the propeller hub. All major structures were accounted for at the accident site.

The following accidents had occurred in this reporting period, and had not been previously covered.

Date: September 21, 2021
Info. Source: FAA
Location: Ak Chin
Type: Swearingen SX300 Experimental
Injuries: 1 Serious Injury

TYPE OF ACCIDENT UNSPECIFIED

Very little information was available for the accident except for the date and location. The extent of damage was termed unknown, and the pilot was reported to have been transported to a hospital with serious injuries.

Date: September 22, 2021
Info. Source: FAA
Location: Benson (E95)
Type: Piper PA28-140
Injuries: 1 Uninjured

ENGINE FAILURE

While doing solo student flight training, the pilot reported the aircraft took longer to takeoff and was feeling ‘sluggish”. The pilot attempted to return to the airport, but was forced to make an off airport landing in desert brush one mile north of E95 airport. The aircraft sustained a flat tire, prop strike, dented leading edge of the left wing, and was leaking fuel from the engine compartment.

Date: September 24, 2021
Info. Source: FAA
Location: Prescott
Type: Robinson R44
Injuries: Number Unknown, All Were Uninjured

ENGINE ISSUE

Due to an engine issue, the helicopter made an emergency landing on a local golf course without incident or damage.

Date: September 30, 2021
Info. Source: NTSB, FAA
Location: Phoenix (DVT)
Type: Robinson R44 II
Injuries: 1 Minor Injury

UNKNOWN CIRCUNSTANCES

The NTSB only indicated the date, and time, and location of the accident, number of persons and injuries, and that substantial damage to the helicopter had occurred. The FAA indicated the helicopter had departed from Scottsdale. The FAA report also indicated the R44 had crashed under unknown circumstances in a desert training area northeast of DVT.

Date: October 1, 2021
Info. Source: ASN, NTSB, APA member
Location: Chandler
Type: Piper PA28-181
Robinson R22 Beta II
Injuries: 2 Fatal, 2 Uninjured

MID AIR COLLISION

On October 1, 2021, about 0740 MST, a Piper PA-28-181 airplane, and a Robinson R22 helicopter, were involved in a midair collision near Chandler. The airplane sustained minor damage, and the helicopter was destroyed. The flight instructor, and student pilot of the Piper aircraft, were not injured. The flight instructor, and student pilot of the helicopter, were fatally injured. Both aircraft were operated as FAR Part 91 instructional flights.

Both aircraft were in parallel traffic patterns at Chandler Municipal Airport (CHD), and a review of recorded communications revealed that both aircraft were in contact with air traffic control tower personnel. The airplane was operating in a closed right traffic pattern for runway 4R, and had been cleared to land. The helicopter was operating in a closed right traffic pattern for Taxiway C, and had been "cleared for the option." Shortly after the airplane turned final for Runway 4R, the airplane flight instructor radioed the tower, and reported that they felt and heard a loud bang. The flight instructor believed they might have struck birds, advised the tower, and declared an emergency. He requested that tower look at the landing gear. Tower personnel confirmed they had 3 landing gear extended and again cleared them to land.

During the landing flare, the flight instructor noticed the left wing continued to descend. He utilized aileron inputs to keep the wing up. After the airplane touched down, it veered left and exited the runway before it came to rest in the infield between runway 04R,, and 04L.

During the same timeframe, witnesses reported a downed helicopter in the vicinity of the Chandler Airport. Shortly after, first responders identified the wreckage of the helicopter. The helicopter impacted terrain about .5 mile southwest of the approach end of runway 04R, and a post crash fire ensued.

Recorded Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast (ADS-B) data provided by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), showed that the accident aircraft were operating in VFR traffic patterns at CHD. Both aircraft appeared to be on a base to final turn with the airplane making an approach to runway 04R, and the helicopter making an approach to taxiway C (parallel to and to the right of runway 04R). The data showed both aircrafts' flight paths intersected about 0740:15 at an altitude of about 1,400 ft mean sea level (msl).

DATE: October 17, 2021
Info. Source: APA, NTSB
Location: Arivaca
Type: Rockwell 112B
Injuries: 1 Fatality

CONDITIONS UNK

The Rockwell 122B crashed under unknown conditions near Kitt Peak in the Coyote Mountain Wilderness area near Tucson. The aircraft had departed from Ryan Field (RYN). At the time this report was prepared, the NTSB only recognized that the accident had occurred, the date, and location.