

RECORD OF ☒ VISIT ☐ CONFERENCE OR ☐ TELEPHONE CALL		TIME 11:00 AM	DATE 06/30/2016										
NAME (S) OF PERSON (S) CONTACTED OR IN CONFERENCE AND LOCATION Frank C. Ewing; Inspectors Joe Brown and Tom Savickas		ROUTING <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="width: 50%; padding: 2px;">SYMBOL</th> <th style="width: 50%; padding: 2px;">INITIALS</th> </tr> <tr><td style="height: 20px;"></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 20px;"></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 20px;"></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 20px;"></td><td></td></tr> </table>		SYMBOL	INITIALS								
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Cherry Ridge Airport N30 Honesdale, PA													
SUBJECT June 29, 2016 accident involving Mr. Ewing in N8237Z													
DIGEST Myself and Inspector Tom Savickas interviewed Frank Ewing the day following his accident in PA-28-161 N8237Z. He stated that he and his family which included his wife and two children were on a return trip home when they were attempting to take off from N30. They were attempting to depart at about 1730 local time. He stated that they taxied to runway 36 and used the runway available from the taxiway intersection instead of back taxiing all the way to the end. He stated that the takeoff roll initially seemed sluggish but that it didn't seem to be abnormal. He said his procedure is to accelerate to about 65 knots and then rotate. When they reached that point he lifted the aircraft off the ground but immediately felt like they wouldn't clear the trees off the departure end of the runway. He then pulled the power back and immediately put the airplane back on the runway. At that point he said he deliberately steered the airplane to the right of the runway to avoid going straight off the end. The airplane departed the right side of the runway into the brush and grass and avoided going into the lake/pond. We asked Mr. Ewing if he performed a weight and balance prior to departure and he stated that he had and that he was within limits for both the C.G. and weight. Inspector Savickas noted that there was an irregularity with his compressions while looking													
CONCLUSION, ACTION TAKEN, OR REQUIRED													
DATE 07/07/2016	TITLE Aviation Safety Inspector	SIGNATURE											

DIGEST (CONT)

through the aircraft logbooks and inspections. Mr. Ewing then commented that his engine has not been performing the way it should and he felt maybe that was the reason why this particular takeoff resulted in an accident.



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Todd Gunther
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: July 1, 2016
Person Contacted: Vincent Van Laak (Airport Manager)
NTSB Accident Number: ERA16CA237

Mr. Van Laak was interviewed over the telephone.

According to Mr. Van Laak, he watched the accident airplane's take off.

He was trimming grass near the parking area and stopped to watch the airplane takeoff.

It seemed like it "took a while to get up to speed," then attempted to liftoff and went off the right side of the runway.

He immediately called 911.

During the takeoff, the engine sounded normal to him and he did not hear any "odd noises."

When they recovered the airplane, the flaps were in the up position.



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Todd Gunther
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: July 1, 2016
Person Contacted: Frank Ewing (Pilot)
NTSB Accident Number: ERA16CA237

Mr. Ewing was interviewed over the telephone.

According to Mr. Ewing, during the takeoff from Runway 36, when the airplane reached rotation speed, it felt like it suddenly lost speed. When he tried to rotate it would not climb or "maintain an altitude."

It did not feel like it had the "oomph it should."

He realized that there was no way he was going to clear the trees at the end of the runway.

This was the first airplane he had owned and believed that there might have been a possible compression issue, as "years ago" the compression listed in "the annuals" was lower.

During the takeoff he had approximately 35 gallons of gasoline on board, 3 passengers, and 110 pounds of baggage. He estimated that he was just below gross takeoff weight.

During the aborted takeoff, the airplane went off the right side of the runway and all three landing gear were damaged along with the firewall.

When asked if he had checked the density altitude he said no.

From Vincent, the airport manager.

Joe Brown
Aviation Safety Inspector-Operations
Allentown FSDO

[REDACTED]
Allentown, PA 18109
[REDACTED]

From: Cherry Ridge Airport [[mailto:\[REDACTED\]](#)]
Sent: Wednesday, July 06, 2016 11:48 AM
To: Brown, Joseph (FAA)
Subject: Re: Accident June 29-N8237Z

For my witness statement:

I usually am gone from work at the time of the incident (5:30 pm), but I stayed to do some additional lawn care since I felt behind. I had previously seen the pilot and passengers at and around the gas pump, and going back and forth to the maintenance shop TML. They stayed at the pump for a while, and at one point I noticed him with his cowling door open; I felt like asking but decided not to (he later said that he was putting in oil at the time).

It is worth noting that there is a small additional bit of runway past the turn onto 36 that he did not back-taxi for takeoff, but I do not think it would have helped; I am no good at estimating but it is perhaps 150 feet.

I stopped to watch the takeoff partly as a matter of habit, partly from nostalgia thinking of trips I had taken with my father as a child. From the start, I felt that the takeoff roll was slow; I tend to feel uncomfortable watching slow takeoffs, as I am not very good at estimating speed and am not a pilot. I am only really comfortable once they are visibly past flight speed, and stable. For that reason I was nervous about the takeoff speed, but uncertain.

I do not recall anything in the sound of the aircraft being abnormal. I was not specifically listening to it, but have heard a fair number of aircraft engines and tend to notice when an aircraft engine sounds substantially off.

As the aircraft started to pass the halfway point, I got more and more anxious, wondering if he was going to abort takeoff and try again. This grew as he ran out of pavement to safely abort; he reached approximate takeoff speed and might have gotten a few inches off the ground, but came back down immediately and immediately began to abort. Shortly after passing the north threshold lights, he veered right into the grass at a shallow angle.

The terrain where he came off the runway is uneven, and he had a fair amount of speed left from the takeoff attempt, so he bounced a fair bit as he came off, which is likely the cause of the sheared landing gear. Immediately upon seeing him off the runway, I ran to my car and called 9-1-1.

I believe I was first on the scene, but the family was already getting out of the aircraft and removing their personal belongings. They said that nobody was hurt; the dispatcher sent fire and EMS as a matter of policy. The family was evaluated by the EMTs but nobody was taken to a hospital nor, I believe, was there any first aid or treatment at the scene.

I recall the pilot saying repeatedly that the abort was something that had never happened to him. I seem to recall him mentioning that one wing dipped, and when he reviewed the footage, he was interested to see if the winds had shifted, according to the wind sock. The winds do shift here, but I could not say if that was a factor.



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Todd Gunther
Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: July 12, 2016
Person Contacted: Frank Ewing (Pilot)
NTSB Accident Number: ERA16CA237

Mr. Ewing was interviewed over the telephone.

According to Mr. Ewing, he had taken on approximately 10 gallons of fuel while at N30.

Their destination was Jackson, Tennessee.

After the last interview with the NTSB on July 1, 2016, he had contacted a mechanic and no longer believed that he had a mechanical problem.

When asked if he had back taxied prior to takeoff to use the full length of the runway he advised that he did not.