



MEMORANDUM for RECORD

Ralph E. Hicks
Senior Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region Aviation

Date: March 13, 2018
Person Contacted: Mr. Herbert Rose, Accident Pilot
NTSB Accident Number: ERA17LA269 – Tower City, PA

This investigator interviewed Mr. Rose by telephone. Due to the extent of his injuries, I informed Mr. Rose that I would obtain the required information from the NTSB Form 6120.1 (NTSB Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident Report) over the phone and he would not be required to complete the form himself. Mr. Rose reported the following:

- Mr. Rose was the sole occupant on N709HR. He was flying the airplane from the aft seat. This was to be the first flight away from Tower City (74N). He was planning to land at Deck Airport, Myerstown, PA for breakfast. The flight was still within the Phase I test period. He was testing an upgrade to the landing gear that he had just installed. He flew the airplane on the day prior to the accident and the flight was uneventful; all aircraft systems were normal.
- Mr. Rose performed the preflight inspection and all items were normal with the airplane. He used the aircraft checklist. Ground operations up to the engine run-up and takeoff were normal. Fuel tank was full, 12 gallons on board.
- Mr. Rose taxied to the end of the runway for takeoff on runway 5. He specifically recalled seeing his hand push the throttle forward to initiate the takeoff roll. He saw the gauges “come to life” and the takeoff commenced. He felt the tail wheel rise, and then “the lights went out.” He did not recall any events after this that pertained to the accident.
- Mr. Rose’s injuries included a broken neck, lost sight in left eye, 6 teeth were broken out, 2 pushed up into the sinuses, heart surgery, 3 broken ribs, broken

arm, broken shoulder, crushed larynx, and laceration on neck. Extensive recovery and physical therapy.

- Mr. Rose believes that he had a leaking aortic valve, which caused him to black out during the takeoff roll. The aortic valve was replaced in the hospital after the accident as soon as he was physically able. He went through 93 days of physical therapy. Also, they found an aneurism on the aortic artery and repaired that as well.
- The airplane had 4-point, 9-G restraints installed. The buckle pulled out at the attachment point during the crash.
- Mr. Rose had a private, single engine land rating, no instrument or instructor ratings. Well over 900 hours total time, 12 in the Air Camper. He had a current flight review and will provide documentation. He was flying off a driver's license for his medical. He allowed his FAA medical, issued in 2010, to lapse because of thyroid cancer. The FAA wanted him to get a full body scan for cancer every year and he did not want to do that. He was not aware of any heart issues prior to the accident.
- Subaru engine, came out of a crashed car. Completely rebuilt. 9.8 hours on the engine since the rebuild.
- The engine and airplane were both operating fine at the time of the accident. There were "absolutely no mechanical issues" with the airplane at the time of the accident. No stall warning or AoA indicator installed.
- The airplane had a 406mhz ELT installed. It activated during the crash.
- Mr. Rose agreed to obtain his medical records for his care after the accident and will forward to the NTSB for review.