

April 25, 2018

Inspector Statement

Registration Number: N3167C

Make: Cessna

Model: 182R

Serial Number: R18200247

On March 28, 2018, about 1223 central daylight time, a Cessna R182, N3167C, was destroyed when it impacted terrain shortly after takeoff near Ashville, Alabama. The private pilot was fatally injured. The personal flight was conducted under Part 91. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and a visual flight rules flight plan was filed for the flight, which departed (GAD), Gadsden, Alabama, destined for ort (MSY), New Orleans, Louisiana. According to air traffic control audio information , the airplane contacted Birmingham-Shuttlesworth International Airport, Birmingham, Alabama, shortly after departure. The pilot reported he was "7 miles south of the airport and climbing through 700 for 2,500," and requesting flight following. The airport tower controller gave the pilot a transponder code and the pilot advised the code was "in the box." There were no further communications with the pilot. The pilot was reported missing by family members when he did not arrive at MSY. An alert notice (ALNOT) was issued and the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center alerted the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) to the missing airplane. On March 30, about 1815, a CAP airplane spotted the wreckage and guided ground crews to the location.

The initial tree impact occurred on flat heavily wooded terrain at an elevation of about 525 ft. The trees that were impacted were approximately 50 ft tall. The wreckage path was about 200 ft long, the main wreckage came to rest on a heading of 210°.

Approximately 15 ft beyond the initial tree impact was an additional tree strike, with a portion of a wing strut in the top branches. A portion of the right elevator was located in an adjacent tree about 40 ft high. All flight control surfaces were located at the accident site. The main wreckage was about 140 ft from the initial tree strike and consisted of the cockpit, portions of the fuselage, wings, and empennage. Sections from the top and bottom of the fuselage, cockpit instruments, and the cockpit panel were located along the debris path

The three-bladed propeller was located about 20 ft from the main wreckage; the propeller was separated from the engine, two of the blades remained attached to the propeller hub and the hub remained attached to the propeller flange. The separated blade was found adjacent to the main wreckage. The engine was separated from the airframe and located the furthest from the initial tree strike. In addition, several pieces of the impacted tree exhibited approximately 45° angle cuts. The four-seat, high-wing, retractable-gear equipped airplane was manufactured in 1978. It was powered by a Lycoming O-540, 235-horsepower engine.

The pilot held a private pilot certificate with an airplane single-engine land rating. His most recent FAA third-class airman medical certificate was issued on May 30, 2017, with the limitation, "Must have available glasses for near vision. Not valid for night flying or by color signal control." At that time, he reported 425 total flight hours. At 1156, the

weather conditions reported at GAD included, wind from 210° at 11 knots gusting to 17 knots; visibility 10 statute miles; few clouds at 4,000 ft; temperature 24° C, dew point 16° C; and an altimeter setting of 30.09 inches of mercury. The wreckage was retained for further examination.

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John Park
Aviation Safety Inspector
1500 Urban Center Drive
Suite 250
Vestavia Hills, Al 35242

