



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

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Air Safety Investigator
Eastern Region

Date: 06/07/2023
Subject: Interview with Richard Hess (Pilot In Command of N87RT)
NTSB Case Number: ERA23LA261

Mr. Hess was interviewed over the telephone. The following is a summary of the information he provided:

According to Mr. Hess, the airplane had just had the left hydraulic pump replaced. It had been test flown on Monday (two days before the accident) and everything was working fine.

On the evening of the accident (06/06/2023) He, his copilot Mr. Sanders, and his three passengers, had from RYY (Cobb County Airport, Atlanta, Georgia) for ECP (Panama City, Florida).

He flew the ILS approach for Runway 16 and configured as normal. While on final approach (about 1-minute from touchdown) they received a "Too Low Terrain" warning from the GPWS.

The touchdown was normal, and the spoilers came out ok but there were no brakes, and no reversers. He tried to "reset" but they went off the end of the runway and into the approach light system.

N87RT

6/6/2023

We took off from Cobb County International Airport, GA (KRYY) about 20:00 EDT on an IFR flight plan. The weather was VMC. We had two crew and three passengers. All systems worked normal for taxi and takeoff: steering, engines, electrics, hydraulics, avionics. The 50 minute flight at FL220 was uneventful. I set up for a straight in ILS approach at Panama City, FL (KECP) since it was now nighttime and it's a bit of a 'black hole' effect with no lights except those of the airport itself.

Gear and flaps extended normally. We confirmed hydraulic pressures and quantities, especially since the left hydraulic pump and filters had been replaced and the system flushed recently.

I touched down 2500 feet from the approach end, extended the airbrakes (speed brakes) then placed both engines into reverse idle. However, the reversers never deployed but we did get the system disagree horn. I applied normal brakes and felt no deceleration. I verbalized on interphone "no brakes" and my copilot immediately tried his brakes with no effect. I then pulled the emergency brake handle to the first notch, again with no effect and finally pulled it to the second stop (full emergency brakes). Same result.

I tried recycling the brakes and reversers, again with no effect. I quickly rejected the thought about going around since I didn't know the position of the reversers and we were now getting near the end of the 10,000 foot runway. I tried to shut down both engines with the throttles but with the reverser piggy back handles still up it wouldn't let me. At this point I didn't think about telling the copilot to pull the fire handles because we were exiting the prepared surface and all my attention was on where we were going. I had the runway 34 approach light metal supports straight ahead and I only had time to use the rudder to aim between two of the metal poles.

We passed between the two poles which my wings clipped, driving them across the inboard of the wings and into the front face of both engines. We bounced once over a sizable hump in the grass and then went into deep, soft sand where the gear collapsed, bringing the aircraft to a stop. I sent the copilot out first to open the entry door and get the passengers out of the aircraft. I was finally able to cutoff the throttles, turn off the batteries and exit the aircraft.

All of us were uninjured. We had a very small fire on the left wing about where the main gear would have been. I used the cockpit fire extinguisher to smother that fire then we waited for the airport fire and rescue to arrive which they did within a few minutes.

When taking pictures of the aircraft afterwards, I noticed that the thrust reverser emergency stow switches were in the unguarded up "STOW" position. I've literally done the T/R checks on taxi-out hundreds of times on many types of aircraft and I've never forgotten to turn the switches back to the normal position, so I was surprised. I honestly couldn't remember if I'd tried to reset those switches as we raced down the ECP runway. However, after further systems review, I confirmed the disagreement horn will only blare in that configuration when trying to deploy them.

The Falcon 10 brakes take a stronger application on the brake pedals than on other types I've flown, and T/Rs were NOT originally installed when the aircraft was first built. They were added later. So, I expected the brakes should have been able to handle being applied at about 100 KIAS. In my situation we felt nothing on both normal and emergency brakes for the entire landing roll.

The thrust would normally be held to reverse idle until the buckets had fully deployed but with the stow switches in STOW, I was reminded you can pull the reverse levers higher, i.e. to a higher RPM. So, if I initially thought I had the reversers deployed but they were not, any further throttle movement would have resulted in more forward thrust. I couldn't figure out how both normal and emergency brakes could have failed simultaneously, but with 100 KIAS and higher forward thrust, it's possible the braking system was overwhelmed almost immediately upon application. If in fact I had forgotten to return the emergency stow switches to normal that would have exasperated the energy the brakes would have to overcome.

I hope this account helps with the troubleshooting. Did I cause this accident to happen? I don't know but I suspect I exasperated the problem because of the T/Rs. In 47 years and 29,000 hours, I've never had such an event. If anything, I am re-motivated to ensure that all my future operations are conducted as precisely as possible.

I am available for any questions. Thank you.

Richard E Hess

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