

Benhoff Kathryn

From: Ben Lula [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 14, 2016 10:35 AM
To: Benhoff Kathryn
Subject: Report Narrative

Friday, October 14th, approximately 10:00am

Departure: AK59 King Ranch, Chickaloon, AK

Intended destination: PAAQ Palmer Municipal Airport, Palmer, AK

No FAA flight plan was filed

Weather conditions for the intended destination observed via internet. Departure location weather observed visually. No weather briefing was obtained from the FAA.

Clear visibility, fairly steady wind estimated to be 10-12 knots. Before the takeoff, I estimated the wind to be 10-15 knots. The wind favored Runway 060, a grass runway with the first third being an upslope. After the aborted takeoff, I would estimate the wind to have been higher; 15-18 knots, still favoring Runway 060.

Cessna N488E is a Cessna 152, with a Lycoming O-235 Engine. This airplane also has a Sportsman STOL wing leading edge cuff.

The aircraft was loaded with myself, one passenger, 9 gallons of fuel, and approximately 12 lbs of weight in the baggage area behind the seats. The takeoff was performed with 10° of flaps, for a short field takeoff. Full power was applied before the aircraft was aligned with the runway, because of the soft field technique used on a grass runway. Carburetor heat was confirmed "OFF", engine gauges (oil temperature and pressure) both in the green arc, and the airspeed needle was indicating almost immediately. The aircraft was suited for a safe takeoff in my judgement.

Soon after reaching the top of the gradient, the aircraft began to develop lift, and the wheels began to leave the ground. I relaxed back pressure slightly, in order to remain in Ground Effect. This would allow me to accelerate more efficiently to obtain a safe climbing speed. However, in relaxing back pressure, I allowed the aircraft to lightly settle to the ground again. This caused my ground roll to be lengthened. The airplane continued to fly after leaving the ground for the second time, but again began to settle. This second settling, I believe, was due to a lull in the headwind. Accordingly, I determined that it would no longer be safe to try to complete the takeoff. I decided to idle back and abort. In the time it took me to idle back, the aircraft had again begun to climb slightly. Since power was at idle, the plane quickly settled to the runway in time for me to firmly apply the brakes. The aircraft slid for 80-90 yards before going off the end of the runway. It then proceeded to travel for another 40 yards before coming to rest. The aircraft had decelerated considerably by the time the aircraft came to rest, and thankfully there were not even minor injuries.

I will readily admit that for the runway I was using, I was late in deciding to abort. If it were a dry, paved runway, there might not have been any damage to the airplane. According to calculations and experience, given the conditions, and given steady wind, the airplane would have flown. In the moment though, with this particular instance, I judged it to be unsafe for my passenger and myself, and the outcome of the flight, to continue with the takeoff. I do believe that I made the right decision, and the safest decision. I made a judgement call, and unfortunately for the condition of the airplane, it was too late. Thankfully for those on board, it was the safest route to take.