

My name is Derek Michael Oaks. I was born on [REDACTED] and served for twenty-four years, five months in the Air Force. I was on active flying status for over twenty years, including over ten straight years from May 2005 to August 2015 when I retired. While in the Air Force, I flew for just under 4500 hours, including over 2600 in the A-10A/C, 560 hours in the C-17A, and 980 hours in the C-130E. I have over 500 instructor hours in the A-10, and over 250 evaluator hours, not including the instructor and evaluator time I have in the simulator. I was an aircraft commander in both the C-17 and the C-130. As a civilian pilot, I have a commercial multi- and single-engine instrument rating, and have flown the BAC 167 Strike Master for close to 120 hours, approximately 25 hours in a Piper PA-22 Tripacr, and am checked out in the Piper Arrow PA-28. I do not have exact civilian hours right now as my log book was with me in the crash, data unrecoverable. I renewed my Class II medical in May of 2017. I started flying post-retirement in November of 2016. I do not drink or smoke at all.

In the last 90 days, I have flown approximately 30 hours in the Strikemaster, 15 hours in the Tripacr, and one hour in the Arrow. My last flight was on Friday, 21 July 2017, in the Arrow. During this period, I have only logged a couple of hours of instrument time.

I live in Bountiful, Utah, and commute for Blue Air. The previous two days were uneventful in terms of sleep cycles, amount of sleep, etc. I spent the majority of the time at home doing chores, with the exception of a wedding and dinner date in Salt Lake City on Saturday, 22 July 17, and church on 23 Jul 17. I caught a 0550 flight out of Salt Lake into Las Vegas, landing just after 0600L.

I arrived at the Henderson Executive Airport at approximately 0700L on 24 July 2017 to meet with the maintenance team from Blue Air Training, LLC to discuss the maintenance work for the morning prior to my launch to Reno, the configuration for the aircraft, and any help that they needed from me for engine runs, operational tests, etc. Afterwards, I had breakfast then went back to the pilot lounge and into the sleeping area for an hour of sleep. When I awoke, they were ready for me to ops check the flaps and some avionics, so we all went out to the flight line around 1030.

For aircraft configuration, I selected to upload full wings, full tips, and 50# of fuel each in the external drop tanks, and no external travel pod based on a 15-knot head wind, 33 degrees Celsius ramp temperature, 6500' runway, and a total weight just under 10,500#. The actual weight was closer to 10,250#. I planned on a static takeoff, with a max power engine check prior to takeoff.

I started engines at approximately 1140, and taxied out and took the runway at approximately 1155L. I set my flaps to takeoff, ran up my engine initially at 90% for an engine check, and then pushed the power to max power while holding the brakes for an additional engine check. The engine gauges were all in the green, with slight engine RPM vibration within limits (less than 1/2 a percent).

I released brakes, and the aircraft accelerated normally. I rotated at 105 knots right before the 4,000 mark, and the aircraft initially rotated fine. I held the rotation picture until I fully broke ground, but then felt like the aircraft was vibrating. I pushed the nose over to remain in ground effect but stay barely off the ground in order to accelerate. In doing so, the aircraft climbed a bit, enough for me to feel comfortable raising the gear to reduce drag, but did not accelerate. I consciously did not try to stop despite the initial vibration because I was past my abort speed, and still expected the

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20 Jul 17

aircraft to fly fine. I left my flaps at takeoff setting. I was unable to accelerate past about 115 knots and felt the aircraft settling back down to the ground.

Resigning myself to a crash landing, I focused forward and tried to keep the aircraft level so that it would belly in and not cartwheel, then braced for impact. I felt the aircraft clip the road south of the field, then impacted the ground shortly thereafter. It seemed to skid straight ahead at first, then hit something and came to a stop facing to the northeast. As I hit something, I hit my helmeted head on the glare shield, but was not unconscious. I immediately assessed my status, unstrapped, and when I saw flames growing on the right side of the aircraft, I quickly climbed out of the aircraft on the left side and ran away.

If you have any further questions, you can reach me at

[REDACTED] or cell [REDACTED]

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