



INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Elliott Simpson
Aviation Accident Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Interview Date: October 20 & 23, 2017
Person Contacted: Blake Byers
NTSB Accident Number: WPR18LA012

Narrative:

During a telephone conversation Mr. Byers stated the following:

- No anomalies noted during the preflight checks.
- Boarded, and after startup noted slight engine roughness. Not necessarily unusual as the engine can sometimes run rough while warming up.
- Performed pre-takeoff checks, and confirmed the weather, with wind at 280/11 which presented no problem for a runway 30 departure. Wind at destination airport, SMO, slightly higher.
- Called SQL local ground controller, initiated taxi, and performed a runup in the runup area. Engine roughness was now gone, and the magneto check was uneventful with 70 rpm drop on each magneto. The remaining checks were uneventful, and included setting elevator trim for takeoff, checking flight controls, electrical load, fuel level, and autopilot status. He checked the CAPS system, and made a mental note to initiate only above 800 ft agl.
- He was then cleared to lineup and wait, and after receiving takeoff clearance, he gradually applied engine throttle in a progressive manner so as not to exceed the manifold pressure limits.
- Airspeed was alive, and he began rotation at 75 to 77 knots.
- Immediately after breaking ground, he felt as if the airplane was remaining in ground effect longer than usual, and he perceived a reduction in engine power. He described the sensation as one of the engine running rough, although in the moment, he did not look at the engine gauges to confirm power had been lost.
- He decided to abort the takeoff, and reduced engine power, but instinctively then added engine power again to help the airplane settle rather than land hard. He then realized that this was not a full-length runway landing, and pulled the throttle completely back, and applied full braking.
- He realized the airplane would not stop on the runway, and told his passenger to brace.

- The airplane then passed beyond the runway threshold, into the grass and then a ditch, and then onto the perimeter road. The lap belt airbags deployed as soon as the airplane hit the ditch.
- Both he and the passenger immediately egressed unaided.
- He did not turn off any of the airplanes systems, but instructed one of the first responders (possibly an airport operations employee) to shut everything off as soon as they arrived.
- With regard to checklists, he uses both paper and the electronic checklist included in the airplanes Garmin 1000 (Perspective) suite, and he used both on the day of the accident.
- He could not recall specifically setting the flap position but stated that typically he departs with flaps set to 50%, although he has performed 0% flap takeoff's during training.
- He did not recall being distracted during the preflight checks, taxi, or runup portion of the flight.