



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Office of Aviation Safety
Western Pacific Region

July 12, 2021

ONSITE EXAMINATION NOTES

WPR21FA266

A. ACCIDENT

Location: Wikieup, AZ
Date: July 10, 2021
Aircraft: N3688P Beech C90
NTSB IIC: Albert Nixon

B. EXAMINATION PARTICIPANTS:

Albert Nixon
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C. SUMMARY

Examination of the accident site was conducted on July 11th and 12th, 2021, at the accident site near the Wikieup Arizona. The FAA inspector was present on July 12th. The left wing was found about 0.79 miles northeast of the main wreckage site and did not sustain any thermal damage. The postaccident examination of the airframe and engine revealed no additional preimpact anomalies or malfunctions that would have precluded normal operation.

DETAILS OF THE INVESTIGATION

1.0 WRECKAGE AND IMPACT INFORMATION

The accident site is about 15 miles northeast of Wikieup, Arizona, and located in mountainous terrain, covered with rocks, ranging in size from pebbles to boulders, and sage brush about 3 ft in height.

The main wreckage was about 465 ft away from the ridgeline, with the slope gradually increasing from 15° at the main wreckage site to 30° at the end of the debris path (figure 1). The main wreckage area contained a section of the cockpit, of which was consumed by fire. The main wreckage was located about 34.8173000°, -113.3887333° with an elevation of about 4,510 ft.



Figure 1. Main wreckage area

Situated about 25 ft downslope north from the main wreckage site is engine A (figure 2). Engine A showed thermal and compression damage from impact. Adjacent to the engine were 3 propeller blades and all sustained thermal damage. Blade A1 was separated from the hub with a fractured blade tip and chordwise scratches. Blade A2 was separated from the hub and had trailing edge gouges and twisting deformation. Blade A3 was separated from the hub with

leading and trailing edge gouges and a fractured blade tip. Blade A4 was separated from the hub with leading and trailing edge gouges and a fractured blade tip.



Figure 2. Engine A and 3 blades within the main wreckage site.

The forward section of the airplane sustained substantial impact and thermal damage. Only partial sections of the instrument gauges, parts of seats, skin from the fuselage, and insulation, comprised most of the noticeable parts. Most of the debris found was unrecognizable.

Engine B was located about 69 ft downslope southwest of the main wreckage (figure 3). Engine B sustained thermal and compression damage from impact. The blades were found in various positions. Blade B1 was downslope, about 85 ft southwest of engine B. Blade B1 was separated from the hub and sustained substantial leading-edge gouges with twisting deformation about midpoint to the blade tip. Blade B2 was downslope, about 20 ft northeast from engine B. Blade B2 separated from the hub and sustained face chordwise scratches and leading and trailing edge gouges with twisting deformation from midpoint towards the blade tip. Blade B3 was upslope, about 50 ft east from engine B and was separated from the hub. Blade B3 sustained chordwise scratching, leading and trailing edge gouges. Blade B4 was upslope, about 7 ft south from blade B3 and was separated from the hub. Blade B4 sustained leading and trailing edge gouges with a fractured blade tip.



Figure 3: View of Engine B.

Most of the right wing was downslope, about 134 ft southwest from the main wreckage. The right wing was divided into 2 major sections connected only by the cables to the flight controls. The first section (inboard portion) of the wing sustained thermal and impact damage throughout. Separating the first section to the second section was a boulder. The second section (outboard portion) of the right wing sustained impact and thermal damage. The outboard flap was attached and sustained impact damage. A section of the aileron was found downslope, about 50 ft northwest away from the right wing. A main landing gear was found about 10 feet east from the right wing and sustained thermal and impact damage. Adjacent to the outboard section of the right wing was part of the right side of the fuselage, with which sustained impact and thermal damage.



Figure 4: Two sections of the right wing.

The empennage was downslope, about 89 ft northwest from the main wreckage. The left horizontal stabilizer sustained impact damage. The left elevator remained attached however, it sustained impact damage. The left and right elevator trim tabs were attached. The right horizontal stabilizer was attached and sustained impact damage. The right elevator was partially separated from the stabilizer. The vertical stabilizer separated but was found on top of the empennage consistent with impact damage. The top portion of the vertical stabilizer sustained leading edge damage. The rudder remained attached and sustained minimal impact damage.



Figure 5: Empennage as viewed upslope.

The left wing was about 0.79 miles northeast from the main wreckage site. The left wing came to rest inverted with wrinkling throughout consistent with impact damage. The left-wing tip impacted terrain and was bent upward, as seen from its resting point. The aileron, inboard and outboard flaps were intact. When the left wing was moved upright, observation of the fuel tank revealed that the tank was close to full. Bulging across to the upper surface leading edge of the wing was observed, consistent with the fuel causing the damage during impact.



Figure 6: Left wing as located at the accident site viewed from the outboard section.

Submitted by

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