

National Transportation Safety Board

Office of Aviation Safety

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WPR23FA223

AIRWORTHINESS

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A. ACCIDENT

Location: Apache Junction, Arizona
Date: June 10, 2023
Time: 0751 Mountain Standard Time
1451 UTC
Airplane: COMPAGNIE DAHER, TB 30 EPSILON, N759F

B. AIRWORTHINESS

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C. SUMMARY

On June 10, 2023, at 0751 mountain standard time, a Compagnie Daher TB-30 Epsilon, N759F, was destroyed when it was involved in an accident near Apache Junction, Arizona. The pilot and passenger were fatally injured. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 personal flight.

The accident airplane was flying formation in the no. 2 position with two other TB-30 airplanes, N315GC (lead) and N130KL (no. 3). The flight of three airplanes departed Falcon Field Airport (FFZ), Mesa, Arizona at 0742 with a planned destination of Payson, Arizona. According to the lead pilot, they intended to fly around the Superstition Mountains east of Mesa, prior to flying to Payson.

Several witnesses observed the airplanes flying to the south along the west side of the mountains at a low altitude. They reported that the lead and no. 2 airplanes were close together, flying similar profiles, while the no. 3 airplane was further behind. One witness stated that the lead airplane crossed a ridgeline in over a 90° bank, and that the second airplane was less aggressive than the first, and the third airplane was higher and even less aggressive. No witnesses on the ground reported observing the accident.

The pilot of the no. 3 airplane reported that just prior to the accident, he observed the no. 2 airplane at his 11 o'clock position headed towards terrain, and that the nose of the airplane pitched up and down several times, but the trajectory of

the airplane did not appear to change. He said the pilot of the no. 2 airplane did not make any radio calls or report any problems prior to the accident. He reported the accident to the pilot of the lead airplane, and they returned to FFZ.

D. DETAILS OF THE EXAMINATION

1.0 Accident Site

The accident site was not accessible by investigators due to rugged terrain. An aerial assessment of the accident site by a National Transportation Safety Board investigator the day of the accident revealed that the airplane impacted near vertical terrain about 200-400 ft below a ridgeline. The debris field extended about 200 ft downslope from the initial point of impact (figure 1).



Figure 1 - Accident Site (Courtesy of Pinal County)

2.0 Airframe Examination

The wreckage was identifiable as that from N759F. The wreckage was highly fragmented. The identifiable components included portions of the cockpit, the tail section from the wing spar aft to the vertical stabilizer, the left wing flap fragments from both wings, the left, right, and nose gear assemblies. The main landing gear appeared to be in the stowed position. The nose gear assembly was separated from the fuselage. Impact damage prevented determination of flight control continuity.



Figure 2 - Airplane Wreckage (Right Side)



Figure 3 - Airplane Wreckage (Left Side)



Figure 4 - Tail Section (Right Side)



Figure 5 - Vertical Stabilizer

3.0 Engine Examination

The engine was highly fragmented. Portions of the engine case, some accessories, and exhaust tubes were identifiable.



Figure 6 - Identified Engine Components



Figure 7 - Engine Data Plate

4.0 Propeller Examination

One propeller blade was identified. About 24 inches of the blade remained. Chordwise, leading and trailing edge scratches and gouging was evident on the blade.



Figure 8 - Propeller Blade (front)



Figure 9 - Propeller Blade (back)



Figure 10 - Propeller Hub

Submitted by:

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