



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Preliminary Report

Location:	St. Simons Island, GA	Accident Number:	ERA19FA179
Date & Time:	05/25/2019, 0923 EDT	Registration:	N6123T
Aircraft:	Cessna TR182	Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

On May 25, 2019, about 0923 eastern daylight time, a Cessna TR182, N6123T, was destroyed when it impacted terrain during a visual approach to McKinnon St Simons Island Airport (SSI), St Simons Island, Georgia. The commercial pilot was fatally injured. The personal flight was operated under the provisions of Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and an instrument flight rules flight was filed for the flight that originated from Savannah/Hilton Head Island Airport (SAV), Savannah, Georgia, about 0859.

According to preliminary information from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the flight was cleared by Jacksonville Approach Control at 0919 for the visual approach to runway 22 at SSI, and instructed to switch radio frequency to the SSI common traffic advisory frequency, which the pilot acknowledged. No further communications were received and radar contact was lost at 0923, when the airplane was about 5 miles northeast of SSI at an altitude of 1,300 feet mean sea level. That altitude and below is usually were Jacksonville Approach Control loses radar coverage in that area. A witness subsequently observed a fire in a wooded area of a sparsely populated section of residential development and notified law enforcement.

The wreckage came to rest nose down in an approximate 3-ft crater, oriented about a heading of 210° magnetic and most of it was consumed by postcrash fire. No debris path was observed, with the exception of two tree strikes immediately above the wreckage. The engine and forward fuselage remained in the crater. The landing gear was partially extended; however, the preimpact position of the landing gear could not be confirmed. The left wing was folded inverted near the crater. The left flap remained attached and was partially melted. The left aileron had partially separated and melted. The right wing sustained more fire and impact damage than the left wing. The right flap separated and sustained impact and thermal damage. The right aileron partially separated and also sustained impact and thermal damage. Measurement of the flap actuator corresponded to a flaps retracted position. The left elevator separated and the right elevator melted near the elevator trim jackscrew. Measurement of the jackscrew corresponded to a 20° tab up (nose down) elevator trim position. The rudder separated and was fragmented. Flight control continuity was confirmed from the elevator and rudder bellcranks to the cabin area. Continuity was confirmed from the left aileron to the left

wing root and control cables from the right wing were also identified but had been partially consumed by fire.

The engine was recovered from the crater and separated from the airframe for examination. The propeller had separated from the engine and was also recovered from the crater. One propeller blade exhibited s-bending and leading edge gouges. Another propeller blade exhibited tip curling and bending, while the third propeller blade sustained a tip separation. The valve covers and top spark plugs were removed from the engine; the spark plug electrodes were intact and gray in color. The rear engine accessories were also removed. The single-drive dual magneto sustained impact damage and could not be tested. The engine driven fuel pump and propeller governor also sustained impact damage and could not be tested. The fuel strainer screen was recovered and no debris in the screen was observed. The carburetor sustained impact damage; its float was removed and it had also sustained impact damage. The front section of the engine had sustained impact damage and the crankshaft could not be rotated by hand via an accessory gear drive; however, borescope examination of all six cylinders did not reveal any preimpact mechanical malfunctions.

The four-seat, high-wing, retractable tricycle landing gear airplane, was manufactured in 1982. It was powered by a Lycoming O-540, 235-hp engine equipped with a three-blade, constant-speed, Hartzell propeller. A turbocharger was subsequently installed via supplemental type certificate.

The pilot, age 80, held a commercial pilot certificate, with ratings for airplane single-engine land, airplane multiengine land, and instrument airplane. He also held a flight instructor certificate, with a rating for airplane single-engine and instrument airplane. His most recent FAA second-class medical certificate was issued on March 1, 2017. At that time, the pilot reported a total flight experience of 4,600 hours. The pilot also had a Basic Medical date of February 27, 2018.

The recorded weather at SSI, at 0853, was: wind from 260° at 10; visibility 10 miles; clear sky; temperature 27° C; dew point 17° C; altimeter 30.15 inches of mercury.

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N6123T
Model/Series:	TR182 No Series	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Amateur Built:	No		
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	SSI, 18 ft msl	Observation Time:	0853 EDT
Distance from Accident Site:	5 Nautical Miles	Temperature/Dew Point:	27° C / 17° C
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	10 knots / , 260°
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility:	10 Miles
Altimeter Setting:	30.15 inches Hg	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Departure Point:	Savannah, GA (SAV)	Destination:	St. Simons Isla, GA (SSI)

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	On-Ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	31.232500, -81.354722

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Robert J Gretz
Additional Participating Persons:	Juli O'Gorman; FAA/FSDO; Atlanta, GA Jennifer Barclay; Textron Aviation; Wichita, KS James Childers; Lycoming Engines; Williamsport, PA
Note:	The NTSB traveled to the scene of this accident.