



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Brad, Texas	Accident Number:	CEN24LA255
Date & Time:	July 4, 2024, 14:30 Local	Registration:	N983LA
Aircraft:	AIR TRACTOR INC AT-802	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Loss of control in flight	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 137: Agricultural		

Analysis

The pilot was performing firefighting activity at the time of the accident. He reported that after scooping a load of water and applying takeoff power, the airplane encountered a large boat wake which caused it to become airborne. However, the pilot did not have sufficient flight control authority to counter act the engine torque. The left float contacted the water, and the airplane veered to the left. The left-wing spar was damaged during the impact sequence. The pilot reported that there were no mechanical failures or malfunctions before the accident that would have precluded normal airplane operation.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

The pilot's failure to maintain airplane control after encountering a large boat wake.

Findings

Personnel issues	Aircraft control - Pilot
Environmental issues	Choppy surface - Contributed to outcome

Factual Information

History of Flight

Takeoff	Loss of control in flight (Defining event)
---------	--

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline transport	Age:	65,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land; Multi-engine sea	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Balloon; Glider; Gyroplane; Helicopter	Restraint Used:	4-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane; Helicopter	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane multi-engine; Airplane single-engine; Glider; Gyroplane; Helicopter; Instrument airplane; Instrument helicopter	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 1 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	February 7, 2024
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	April 3, 2023
Flight Time:	30000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 150 hours (Total, this make and model), 25000 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	AIR TRACTOR INC	Registration:	N983LA
Model/Series:	AT-802	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	2022	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Restricted (Special)	Serial Number:	802-0983
Landing Gear Type:	Amphibian	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	March 6, 2024 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	16000 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	10 Hrs	Engines:	1 Turbo prop
Airframe Total Time:	228 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	Pratt & Whitney
ELT:	C126 installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	PT6A-67F
Registered Owner:	PHOENIX AIR LLC	Rated Power:	1600 Horsepower
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	Agricultural aircraft (137)
Operator Does Business As:	Henry's Aerial Service	Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KRPH, 1008 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	13 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	14:35 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	330°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 6500 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	7 knots / 17 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	100°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29.87 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	36°C / 20°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Mineral Wells, TX (MWL)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Mineral Wells, TX (MWL)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	14:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	32.393361,-98.448922(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Sorensen, Timothy
Additional Participating Persons:	Darren Pittacora; FAA Flight Standards; Irving, TX
Original Publish Date:	August 22, 2024
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class 4
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=194644

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant events in other modes of transportation—railroad, transit, highway, marine, pipeline, and commercial space. We determine the probable causes of the accidents and events we investigate, and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future occurrences. In addition, we conduct transportation safety research studies and offer information and other assistance to family members and survivors for each accident or event we investigate. We also serve as the appellate authority for enforcement actions involving aviation and mariner certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and US Coast Guard, and we adjudicate appeals of civil penalty actions taken by the FAA.

The NTSB does not assign fault or blame for an accident or incident; rather, as specified by NTSB regulation, “accident/incident investigations are fact-finding proceedings with no formal issues and no adverse parties ... and are not conducted for the purpose of determining the rights or liabilities of any person” (Title 49 *Code of Federal Regulations* section 831.4). Assignment of fault or legal liability is not relevant to the NTSB’s statutory mission to improve transportation safety by investigating accidents and incidents and issuing safety recommendations. In addition, statutory language prohibits the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report (Title 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b)). A factual report that may be admissible under 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b) is available [here](#).