



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

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<b>Location:</b>	Reno, NV	<b>Accident Number:</b>	GAA17CA340
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	06/14/2017, 1300 PDT	<b>Registration:</b>	N4206N
<b>Aircraft:</b>	SPORTINE AVIACIJA LAK 12	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>	Loss of control in flight	<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Minor
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

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## Analysis

The glider pilot reported that, during an aerotow takeoff and after becoming distracted by something in the cockpit, he looked back outside and noticed that he was about 100 ft higher than the tow airplane. He added that he attempted to correct, "but the tow hook released on its own." The pilot turned the glider to the left, the left wing impacted the ground, and the glider came to rest in some brush.

The glider sustained substantial damage to the fuselage.

The pilot reported that there were no preaccident mechanical failures or malfunctions with the glider that would have precluded normal operation.

The Federal Aviation Administration's Glider Flying Handbook, FAA-H-8083-13A, "Normal Assisted Takeoff" section, stated, in part:

One of the most dangerous occurrences during aerotow is allowing the glider to fly high above and losing sight of the towplane. The tension on the towline caused by the glider pulls the towplane tail up, lowering its nose. If the glider continues to rise, pulling the towplane tail higher, the tow pilot may not be able to raise the nose. Ultimately, the tow pilot may run out of up elevator authority.

## Probable Cause and Findings

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

The glider pilot's failure to maintain proper pitch during an aerotow takeoff.

## Findings

<b>Aircraft</b>	Pitch control - Not attained/maintained (Cause)
<b>Personnel issues</b>	Aircraft control - Pilot (Cause) Task monitoring/vigilance - Pilot
<b>Environmental issues</b>	Object/animal/substance - Contributed to outcome

## Factual Information

### History of Flight

Takeoff	Miscellaneous/other
Initial climb	Altitude deviation Loss of control in flight (Defining event) Attempted remediation/recovery Glider tow event Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

### Pilot Information

Certificate:	Flight Instructor; Commercial	Age:	70, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Single
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Glider	Restraint Used:	4-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane Single-engine	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Without Waivers/Limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	12/12/2016
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	02/28/2016
Flight Time:	(Estimated) 1761 hours (Total, all aircraft), 8 hours (Total, this make and model), 1576 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 42 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 9 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Manufacturer:	SPORTINE AVIACIJA	Registration:	N4206N
Model/Series:	LAK 12 NO SERIES	Aircraft Category:	Glider
Year of Manufacture:	1986	Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental	Serial Number:	682
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	1
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	03/27/2017, Condition	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1433 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	0
Airframe Total Time:	553.1 Hours as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	
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:	KRTS, 5053 ft msl	Observation Time:	1955 UTC
Distance from Accident Site:	14 Nautical Miles	Direction from Accident Site:	215°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Temperature/Dew Point:	22° C / 2° C
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility	10 Miles
Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	4 knots, 100°	Visibility (RVR):	
Altimeter Setting:	30.1 inches Hg	Visibility (RVV):	
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Reno, NV (NV23)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Reno, NV (NV23)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1300 PDT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

## Airport Information

Airport:	AIR SAILING (NV23)	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt; Dirt
Airport Elevation:	4300 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	17	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	7000 ft / 100 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

## Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	39.868889, -119.702778 (est)

## Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Kathryn R Benhoff	Adopted Date:	08/03/2017
Additional Participating Persons:	Mark Hinzman; FAA; Reno, NV		
Publish Date:	08/03/2017		
Note:	This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.		
Investigation Docket:	<a href="http://dms.ntsb.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=95375">http://dms.ntsb.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=95375</a>		

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