



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Office of Aviation Safety
Western Pacific Region

April 9, 2018

ACCIDENT SITE EXAMINATION SUMMARY

WPR18FA119

This document contains 4 embedded photos.

A. ACCIDENT

Location: Scottsdale, Arizona
Date: April 9, 2018
Aircraft: N7376Y; Piper PA-24-260
NTSB Investigator-in-Charge: Maja Smith

On April 9, 2018, about 2048 mountain daylight time, a Piper PA-24-260, N9456P, collided with the ground shortly after takeoff from Scottsdale Airport (SDL), Scottsdale, Arizona. The commercial pilot, and 5 passengers were fatally injured. The aircraft was registered to an individual and operated by the pilot as a personal flight under the provisions of Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91. Night time visual meteorological conditions prevailed and a flight plan was not filed. The flight was destined for North Las Vegas Airport (VGT), Las Vegas, Nevada.

B. PARTICIPANTS

Maja Smith-NTSB IIC
Yasmin Duran-FAA-FSDO
Elliott Simpson-NTSB
Andrew Swick-NTSB
Charlie Little-Piper Aircraft
Mark Platt-Lycoming

C. SUMMARY

Examination of the accident site was conducted on April 9-10, 2018. All major structural components of the airplane were located at the accident site. The wreckage was recovered to a secure location for further examination.

D. DETAILS OF THE INVESTIGATION

1.0 Accident Site Examination

Main Wreckage: N33° 38.121', W-111° 54.208' – Elevation: 1,484 feet
Accident site was about 1/4-mile northwest of the departure end of SDL

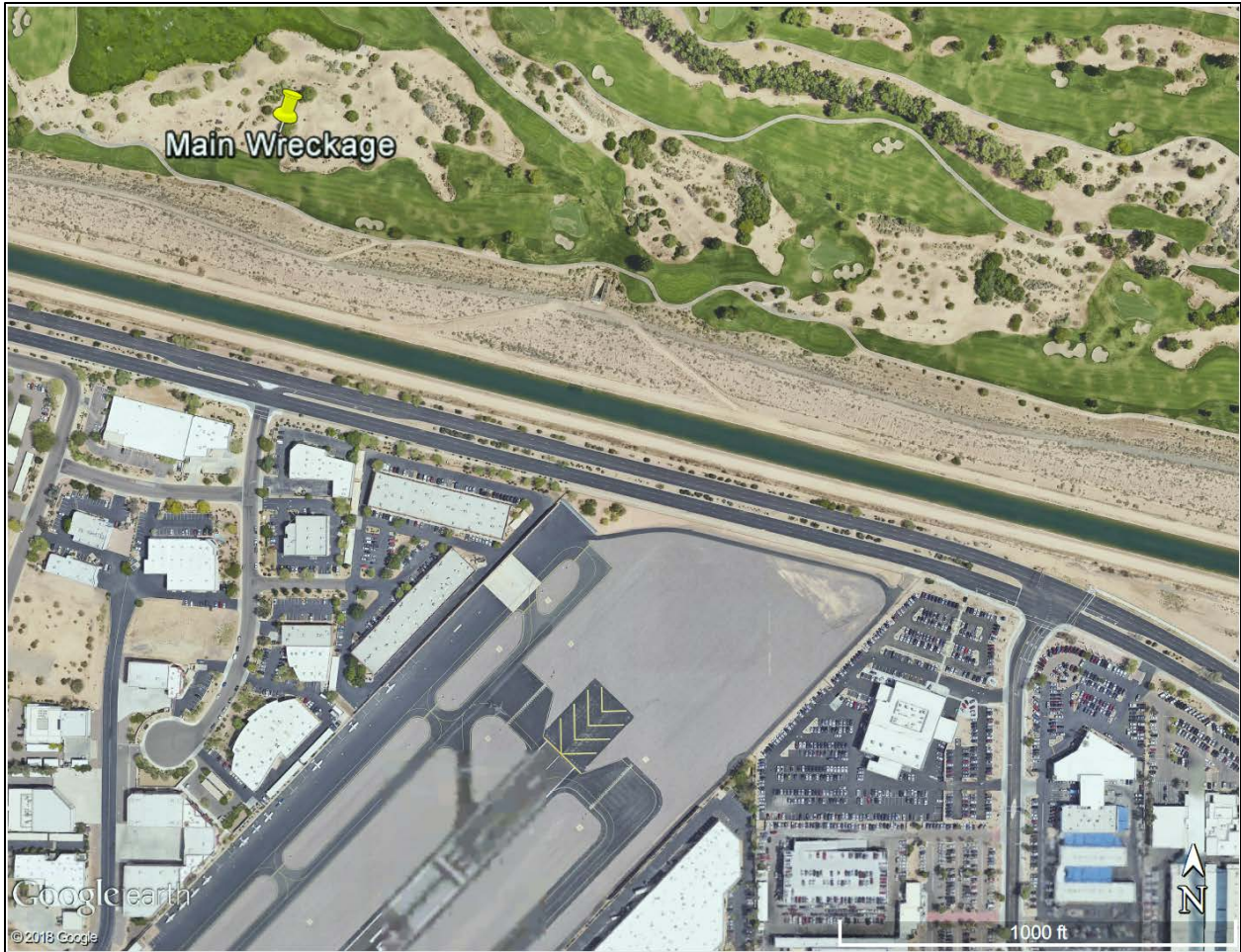


Figure 1-Aerial View of the Airport (SDL) and Accident Site

Examination of the accident site was conducted on April 9-10, 2018, by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The accident site was found adjacent to the No. 2 fairway of the Champions Course of the Tournament Players Club (TPC), 1/2 mile northwest of SDL. A water canal traveling east to west and a 50-foot embankment was located between the golf course and airport property. The main wreckage was substantially damaged by impact forces and postimpact fire.



Figure 2-Aerial View of FIPC

The main wreckage was contained within a debris field of about 180 ft in length and 40 ft wide. The direction of the debris field was oriented on a magnetic heading of a about 245° from the first identified point of contact (FIPC) to the electric motor housing found on the fairway. The direction of the main wreckage was found on a magnetic heading of 335°. A large mesquite tree is located in the middle of the debris field. Its canopy is about 45 ft in diameter. The FIPC in the debris field was a small elongated divot on the east side of the tree. About 4 ft further was an area of disturbed ground measuring about 12 ft in length extending towards the main wreckage. The small divot and disturbed ground is consistent with the airplane impacting the ground in a left wing down attitude. Extending from the area of disturbed ground was a shallow crater about 8 ft in diameter, and about 3 inches deep, and contained sooty streaking residue across the ground.



Figure 3-Left Wing Sections

A large section of the northeast side of the tree canopy separated and was located near the base of the tree. The outboard 4-foot section of the right-wing tip was found near the base of the tree. The right-wing leading edge and auxiliary tank was found wrapped around the base of the tree. A section of left wing spar was found underneath the tree canopy.

The main wreckage was located about 20 ft to the further down the debris field from the trunk of the mesquite tree. The right wing remained attached to the main wreckage and had thermal and impact damage. The wing spar was visible and about 5 ft separated. The auxiliary tank separated from the wing. The main wing tank was breached on the inboard side. A large section of the flap remained attached to wing and appeared to be in the retracted position

The engine remained attached to the main wreckage and was partially covered by the engine cowling. The propeller assembly separated from the engine. The top side of the engine had thermal discoloration and was undamaged. The accessory section had thermal damage.

The instrument panel was destroyed by fire and covered with dirt during initial firefighting efforts. The yoke control tubes were visible and loose from their attachments. The handles were broken from the left yoke. The cabin area contained four seat structures and 5 occupants. The forward seated occupants in seats 1 and 2 were found near their seats and their buckles and latches were found attached. Seat belt signatures were found on the No. 1 seated occupant. The middle row contained both seat structures and one occupant. The middle row occupant that was positioned in the No. 3 seat position was found behind No. 1 and 2 seat structures. The second middle row occupant, seated in No. 4 seat position was found outside of the main wreckage and about 10 ft from the engine. Both seatbelt buckles and latches for seats No. 3 and 4 were found in the cabin and were unattached. The occupants seated in No. 5 and 6 seat positions were found at the seat positions. Both seat belt buckles were found in the area and were unattached to the

latches. One occupant, seated in the middle row, was ejected and found near the main wreckage. The remaining occupants remained in their respective positions. No seat structure was noted in the aft/baggage area where the two aft occupants were located. Seatbelt latches and buckles were secured for the front two occupants. The middle row right seatbelt latch and buckle were found on the seat and not secured. The middle row left seat latch and buckle were not found. The rear seat latches were found in the rear row area. Both landing gear wheels were covered with dirt during initial firefighting efforts. The landing gear was found in its relative area.



Figure 4-Main Wreckage, Empennage

The empennage remained attached to the main wreckage and had impact damage and thermal discoloration. The rudder counter weights remained attached to the rudder and the vertical stabilizer cap fairing was missing. The stabilator and stabilator trim tab was bent upwards about 70° at both midsections of each side. Both stabilator counterweights separated and were found in the debris field.

The propeller assembly was found about 10 ft from the main wreckage, further down the debris field. The blades had bending at their midsections and curling at the tips. The leading edges of the blade tips had chord-wise scratching and gouging. The crankshaft propeller flange remained attached to the propeller hub.

The left wing outboard section and wing skin was found about 10 ft further down the debris field. The left main tank was found 20 ft down the debris field. Multidirectional scratches were visible on the lower surface of the left main tank. A motor housing was the furthest piece of wreckage in the debris field and was found about 90 ft from the left main tank.

The wreckage was relocated to Air Transport in Phoenix, Arizona for further examination.