



Aviation Investigation Factual Report

Location:	FALFURRIAS, Texas	Accident Number:	FTW96LA105
Date & Time:	January 19, 1996, 16:00 Local	Registration:	N598Z
Aircraft:	Piper PA-38-112	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Instructional		

Factual Information

On January 19, 1996, at 1600 central standard time, a Piper PA- 38-112, N598Z, registered to Avlease, Inc. and operated by Flight Training Systems, Inc., as a 14 CFR Part 91 instructional flight, sustained substantial damage during a forced landing near Falfurrias, Texas. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and a VFR flight plan was filed. The student pilot was not injured. The flight originated in Brownsville, Texas, approximately 4 hours 30 minutes before the accident.

On the enclosed Pilot/Operator Report (NTSB Form 6120.1/2), the pilot stated that he departed Brownsville for Corpus Christi, Texas, to practice "touch and go's." The flight then proceeded to Rockport, Texas, where the pilot executed a full-stop landing. While in Rockport, the fuel tanks were topped off. During the preflight, the pilot "found that both fuel tanks were full" and subsequently, the flight departed to Alice, Texas.

The pilot further reported that "I did my preflight again and I found out that there was still enough fuel in both fuel [tanks] to go to Brownsville." The flight departed Alice at 1535 central standard time. Approximately 25 minutes into the return flight, the engine lost power and the "fuel pressure needle dropped to the red line." Emergency procedures by the pilot did not restore engine power. Subsequently, the pilot executed a forced landing to a field with soft soil.

Examination of the airplane by the FAA inspector and the operator's mechanic revealed that the left fuel tank was empty, the gascolator did not contain fuel, and the right fuel tank was full. The FAA inspector reported that the fuel selector was on the left tank. Structural damage occurred to the right wing, and fuselage.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Student	Age:	25, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	August 2, 1995
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	125 hours (Total, all aircraft), 125 hours (Total, this make and model), 46 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 23 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N598Z
Model/Series:	PA-38-112 PA-38-112	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal; Utility	Serial Number:	38-79A0353
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	December 22, 1995 100 hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1670 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	59 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	1798 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, activated, aided in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	O-235-L2A
Registered Owner:	AVLEASE, INC.	Rated Power:	112 Horsepower
Operator:	FLIGHT TRAINING SYSTEMS, INC.	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:	SOUTHWIND	Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	0°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	21°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	ALICE (ALI)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	VFR
Destination:	BROWNSVILLE (BRO)	Type of Clearance:	VFR
Departure Time:	15:35 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:		Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	Forced landing

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	27.220003,-98.13961(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Smith, Joyce
Additional Participating Persons:	JESSE CAVAZOS; SAN ANTONIO , TX
Report Date:	May 31, 1996
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=19751

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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](#).