



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	ALBUQUERQUE, New Mexico	Accident Number:	DEN89LA005
Date & Time:	October 4, 1988, 09:15 Local	Registration:	N3678E
Aircraft:	BALLOON WORKS FIREFLY 7	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE COMMERCIAL BALLOON PLT AND ONE PAX WERE PARTICIPATING IN A BALLOON FIESTA. THE ACFT TOOK OFF FROM ALBUQUERQUE, ON A LOCAL FLIGHT IN LIGHT WINDS. AT ALTITUDE, THE BALLOON ENCOUNTERED EASTERLY WINDS THAT CARRIED THE BALLOON SOUTHWEST OF ALBUQUERQUE, WHERE A LANDING WAS ATTEMPTED. PRIOR TO TOUCHDOWN, THE BALLOON BRUSHED A TREE AND THE PLT ADDED HEAT TO ATTEMPT TO CLIMB. THE BALLOON DID NOT RESPOND FAST ENOUGH AND IT STRUCK THE TERRAIN. THE PAX JUMPED FROM THE BASKET PRIOR TO TOUCHDOWN. AT TOUCHDOWN, THE BALLOON BOUNCED BACK INTO THE AIR AND THE EASTERLY WIND PUSHED THE BALLOON INTO A WALL AND THROUGH THE PICTURE WINDOW OF A RESIDENCE. THE BALLOON CAME TO REST WITH THE ENVELOPE DRAPED OVER THE ROOF, AND THE BASKET INSIDE THE HOME.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: LANDING

Findings

1. OBJECT - TREE(S)
2. (C) COMPENSATION FOR WIND CONDITIONS - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: LANDING - ABORTED

Findings

3. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - HIGH VEGETATION
4. (F) GO-AROUND - ATTEMPTED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

5. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - RESIDENTIAL AREA
6. (C) RECOVERY FROM BOUNCED LANDING - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	60, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Balloon	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	None None	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	349 hours (Total, all aircraft), 331 hours (Total, this make and model), 331 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 41 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 31 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	BALLOON WORKS	Registration:	N3678E
Model/Series:	FIREFLY 7 FIREFLY 7	Aircraft Category:	Balloon
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	F 7-064
Landing Gear Type:	Hull	Seats:	
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	May 21, 1988 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1660 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	54 Hrs	Engines:	0 Unknown
Airframe Total Time:	320 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	STANLEY E STEVENSON	Rated Power:	
Operator:	STEVENSON, STANLEY E.	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:		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	15 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	20°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	13°C / 4°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	ALBUQUERQUE , NM (NONE)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	(NONE)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	08:30 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:		Runway Surface Type:	Grass/turf
Airport Elevation:	0 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	0 ft / 0 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Full stop

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 None	Latitude, Longitude:	35.05902,-106.619338(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Collins, Robert

Additional Participating Persons: JIM MASCONE; ALBUQUERQUE , NM

Original Publish Date: December 3, 1989

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=17623>

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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](#).