Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	GEORGETOWN, Texas	**Accident Number:**	FTW95FA084
Date & Time:	January 5, 1995, 19:54 Local	**Registration:**	N8398Y
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-30	**Aircraft Damage:**	Destroyed
Defining Event:		**Injuries:**	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Positioning		

Analysis

THE PILOT WAS ON A FLIGHT FROM FORT SMITH, ARKANSAS TO LAREDO, TEXAS. WHILE EN ROUTE, HE AIR-FILED AN INSTRUMENT FLIGHT RULES (IFR) FLIGHT PLAN, RECEIVED AN IFR CLEARANCE NEAR TEMPLE, TEXAS, AND REPORTED LEVEL AT 6000 FEET MSL. LATER, A FAINT 'MAYDAY' CALL WAS HEARD BY A SOUTHWEST AIRLINE PILOT, WHICH WAS REPORTED TO AUSTIN APPROACH CONTROL. APPROACH CONTROL LOST RADAR CONTACT AND COMMUNICATION WITH THE AIRPLANE. AT ABOUT 0830 THE NEXT MORNING, THE AIRPLANE WAS FOUND ABOUT 5 MILES SOUTH OF GEORGETOWN, TEXAS, WHERE IT HAD IMPACTED THE TERRAIN IN A VERTICAL DESCENT. NEITHER OF THE PROPELLERS EXHIBITED TWISTING, TIP DAMAGE, OR ROTATIONAL SCARRING. AN EXAMINATION OF THE ENGINES DID NOT DISCLOSE ANY ANOMALIES THAT COULD ACCOUNT FOR A LOSS OF POWER. A MEDICAL OFFICER (FOR TRAVIS COUNTY) REPORTED THAT IN HIS OPINION, THE PILOT MAY HAVE SUFFERED A HEART ATTACK.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: LOSS OF POWER IN BOTH ENGINES AND LOSS OF AIRCRAFT CONTROL FOR UNKNOWN REASONS.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings
1. ALL ENGINES
2. (C) REASON FOR OCCURRENCE UNDETERMINED

Occurrence #2: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: DESCENT

Findings
3. (C) AIRCRAFT CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Factual Information

HISTORY OF FLIGHT

On January 5, 1995, at 1954 central standard time, a Piper PA-30, N8398Y, was destroyed following a loss of control near Georgetown, Texas. The airline transport rated pilot was fatally injured. Dark night instrument meteorological conditions prevailed throughout the area for the 14 CFR 91 positioning flight.

At approximately 0730 the airplane departed Miller International Airport (MFE), Mc Allen, Texas, on a 14 CFR 135 flight to Fort Smith Municipal Airport (FSM), Fort Smith, Arkansas. According to the enclosed load manifest, the airplane departed with 100 gallons of fuel. The airplane was fueled with 41 gallons of 100 octane low lead aviation gasoline at Fort Smith Municipal Airport. A copy of the fuel slip is enclosed.

The airplane departed Fort Smith with a destination of Laredo International Airport (LRD), Laredo, Texas. The pilot air-filed an instrument flight rules (IFR) flight plan and received an IFR clearance near Temple, Texas. The pilot reported level at 6,000 feet MSL to Austin Approach Control. A faint "Mayday" call was heard by a Southwest Airline pilot and reported to approach control. The controller reported radar contact and communications was lost with the airplane.

The wreckage was located on January 6, 1996, at 0830, 5 miles south of Georgetown, Texas.

AIRCRAFT INFORMATION

A examination of the airframe and engine records by a Federal Aviation Administration inspector did not reveal any anomalies or uncorrected maintenance defects.

WRECKAGE AND IMPACT INFORMATION

The aircraft was located in the initial ground scar on a measured magnetic heading of 205 degrees. The left and right engines were buried in the ground at the initial scar. The left and right wing leading edges were crushed, and the right wing tip fuel tank was separated from the wing. The roof was separated from the cabin. The left horizontal stabilizer was separated and found 24 feet from the main wreckage. The empennage and fuselage were partially separated and displaced forward.

Both propeller assemblies were bent aft. The right propeller assembly was found separated at the propeller flange. It was noted that none of the propellers exhibited twisting, tip damage, or rotational scarring. The damage to the assemblies occurred during recovery.

Both fuel boost pump elements were separated from the motors and residual fuel was present. The 2 fuel selectors were loose, and their position could not be determined.

The investigation team examined the engines and found no anomalies that could account for a loss of power. See enclosed wreckage diagram for wreckage distribution details.

MEDICAL AND PATHOLOGICAL INFORMATION

The autopsy was performed by Roberto J. Bayardo, M.D., Office of the Medical Examiner of Travis County, Austin, Texas. In the opinion of Dr. Bayardo, the pilot "came to his death as a result of the injuries suffered from the airplane crash which was caused by the decedent having a heart attack." His report is attached. Toxicological findings were negative.

ADDITIONAL DATA

The airplane wreckage was released to the owner's representative.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline transport; Commercial	**Age:**	50,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	**Seat Occupied:**	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Glider	**Restraint Used:**	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	**Second Pilot Present:**	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	**Toxicology Performed:**	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	**Last FAA Medical Exam:**	October 6, 1994
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	**Last Flight Review or Equivalent:**	
Flight Time:	8600 hours (Total, all aircraft), 8250 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 81 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 34 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 6 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	**Registration:**	N8398Y
Model/Series:	PA-30 PA-30	**Aircraft Category:**	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		**Amateur Built:**	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	**Serial Number:**	30-1142
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	**Seats:**	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	November 2, 1994 100 hour	**Certified Max Gross Wt.:**	3600 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	68 Hrs	**Engines:**	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	8152 Hrs	**Engine Manufacturer:**	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, not activated	**Engine Model/Series:**	IO-320-B1A
Registered Owner:	NORVELL V. NEITZKE	**Rated Power:**	160 Horsepower
Operator:		**Operating Certificate(s) Held:**	On-demand air taxi (135)
Operator Does Business As:	DBA NEITZKE ENTERPRISES	**Operator Designator Code:**	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument (IMC)	**Condition of Light:**	Night/dark
Observation Facility, Elevation:		**Distance from Accident Site:**	
Observation Time:		**Direction from Accident Site:**	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown	**Visibility**	1 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 300 ft AGL	**Visibility (RVR):**	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	**Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:**	/
Wind Direction:	0°	**Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:**	/
Altimeter Setting:		**Temperature/Dew Point:**	
Precipitation and Obscuration:	N/A - None - Fog		
Departure Point:	FORT SMITH , AR (FSM)	**Type of Flight Plan Filed:**	IFR
Destination:	LAREDO , TX (LRD)	**Type of Clearance:**	IFR
Departure Time:	00:00 Local	**Type of Airspace:**	Class E

Airport Information

Airport:		**Runway Surface Type:**	
Airport Elevation:		**Runway Surface Condition:**	
Runway Used:	0	**IFR Approach:**	None
Runway Length/Width:		**VFR Approach/Landing:**	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	**Aircraft Damage:**	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:		**Aircraft Fire:**	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	**Aircraft Explosion:**	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal	**Latitude, Longitude:**	30.639131,-97.680587(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Wigington, Douglas
Additional Participating Persons:	DESIDERIO S AGUILAR; SAN ANTONIO , TX
Original Publish Date:	July 31, 1995
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=19203