



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	AUSTIN, Texas	Accident Number:	FTW87LA126
Date & Time:	May 22, 1987, 12:15 Local	Registration:	N3980X
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-34-200T	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation		

Analysis

THE PLT WAS UNABLE TO RETRACT THE LANDING GEAR AFTER TAKEOFF. THE PLT ELECTED TO RETURN TO THE ARPT AND PERFORM A PRECAUTIONARY LANDING. THE TOUCHDOWN WAS NORMAL FOLLOWED BY THE RIGHT MAIN LANDING GEAR COLLAPSING DURING THE LANDING ROLL. THE ACFT HAD UNDERGONE AN ANNUAL INSPECTION 3 FLT HOURS PRIOR TO THE ACCIDENT. THE ANNUAL INSPECTION INCLUDED EXTENSIVE MAINTENANCE ON THE LANDING GEAR SYSTEM. ONE BOLT WAS FOUND TO BE MISSING FROM THE RIGHT MAIN LANDING GEAR ASSEMBLY.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

Findings

Occurrence #1: AIRFRAME/COMPONENT/SYSTEM FAILURE/MALFUNCTION

Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings

1. (C) LANDING GEAR,MAIN GEAR - INOPERATIVE
2. GEAR RETRACTION - ATTEMPTED - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) GEAR RETRACTION - NOT POSSIBLE - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (C) MAINTENANCE,ANNUAL INSPECTION - INADEQUATE - OTHER MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL
5. (C) COMPLACENCY - OTHER MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL

6. (C) MAINTENANCE, INSTALLATION - INADEQUATE - OTHER MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL

Occurrence #2: MAIN GEAR COLLAPSED

Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

Findings

7. (F) PRECAUTIONARY LANDING - PERFORMED - PILOT IN COMMAND

8. (C) LANDING GEAR, MAIN GEAR - UNLOCKED

Occurrence #3: ON GROUND/WATER ENCOUNTER WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

Findings

9. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - RUNWAY

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	58, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	None Expired	Last FAA Medical Exam:	April 30, 1985
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	2853 hours (Total, all aircraft), 175 hours (Total, this make and model), 2071 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 9 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N3980X
Model/Series:	PA-34-200T PA-34-200T	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	347670013
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	7
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	May 8, 1987 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	4570 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	4 Hrs	Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	2807 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	CONTINENTAL
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	TSIO-360-E
Registered Owner:	R.L. COLLINS	Rated Power:	225 Horsepower
Operator:	R. L. COLLINS	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:	AUS ,631 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:	11:15 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 3500 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	3 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	140°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	28°C / 21°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Destination:	LUBBOCK , TX (LBB)	Type of Clearance:	IFR
Departure Time:	12:10 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class D

Airport Information

Airport:	ROBERT MUELLER AUS	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	631 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	17	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	5000 ft / 150 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Precautionary landing;Traffic pattern

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:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Dickens, Al

Additional Participating Persons: RICHARD SACKETT; SAN ANTONIO , TX

Original Publish Date: March 10, 1988

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=22371>

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant events in other modes of transportation—railroad, transit, highway, marine, pipeline, and commercial space. We determine the probable causes of the accidents and events we investigate, and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future occurrences. In addition, we conduct transportation safety research studies and offer information and other assistance to family members and survivors for each accident or event we investigate. We also serve as the appellate authority for enforcement actions involving aviation and mariner certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and US Coast Guard, and we adjudicate appeals of civil penalty actions taken by the FAA.

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](#).