



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	CARTHAGE, Texas	<b>Accident Number:</b>	FTW88FA161
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	September 3, 1988, 23:48 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N83874
<b>Aircraft:</b>	PIPER PA-34-220T	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	5 Fatal
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

## Analysis

DRG A NIGHT ARRIVAL, THE PLT RPRTD HE COULD MAKE A VISUAL APCH. AT 2341:37 CDT, THE ARTCC CONTROLLER INFORMED HIM THE DESTN ARPT WAS STRAIGHT AHEAD AT 12 MI & REQUESTED THAT HE RPRT WHEN THE ARPT WAS IN SIGHT. AT 2343:30, HE RPRTD THE RWYIN SIGHT & THE CONTROLLER CLEARED HIM FOR A VISUAL APCH. THE FINAL PORTIONS OF THE FLT WERE BELOW THE ALT FOR RADAR COVERAGE. SUBSEQUENTLY, THE ACFT CRASHED IN A WOODED AREA, AT A LOCATION & ON A HEADING THAT WOULD APPROXIMATE A LEFT BASE LEG FOR RWY 35. HOWEVER, INITIAL IMPACT WAS WITH TREES WHILE IN A STEEP RIGHT BANK. NO PREIMPACT PART FAILURE OR MALFUNCTION WAS FOUND DRG THE INVESTIGATION. ALTHOUGH OFFICIAL RPRTS FROM WX STATIONS IN THE AREA SHOWED THE WX WAS ABOVE VFR MINIMUMS, PERSONNEL IN THE AREA OF THE ACDNT SITE RPRTD THE SKY CONDITION WAS OBSCURED WITH FOG.

## Probable Cause and Findings

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

### Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER  
Phase of Operation: APPROACH

Findings

1. (F) LIGHT CONDITION - NIGHT
  2. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - FOG
  3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - OBSCURATION
  4. (C) VFR FLIGHT INTO IMC - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND
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Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER  
Phase of Operation: APPROACH

Findings

5. (C) AIRCRAFT CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
6. (F) SPATIAL DISORIENTATION - PILOT IN COMMAND
7. (F) OBJECT - TREE(S)

## Factual Information

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Airline transport; Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	62, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	Yes
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	Yes
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 2 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	November 5, 1987
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	Yes	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	12000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 50 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	PIPER	<b>Registration:</b>	N83874
<b>Model/Series:</b>	PA-34-220T PA-34-220T	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	34-8133096
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Retractable - Tricycle	<b>Seats:</b>	6
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	September 1, 1988 Annual	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	4570 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	6 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	2 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	988 Hrs	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	CONTINENTAL
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed, activated, aided in locating accident	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	TSIO-360-KB
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	DON GRIFFITH CONSTRUCTION, INC	<b>Rated Power:</b>	220 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>		<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None
<b>Operator Does Business As:</b>		<b>Operator Designator Code:</b>	

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Instrument (IMC)	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Night/bright
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>		<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Observation Time:</b>		<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Unknown	<b>Visibility</b>	
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>		<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	/	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	0°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>		<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	23°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	N/A - None - Fog		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	STARKVILLE , MS (STF )	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	IFR
<b>Destination:</b>	(4F2 )	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	IFR
<b>Departure Time:</b>	22:00 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class G

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>	PANOLA COUNTY-SHARPE 4F2	<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	Asphalt
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>	249 ft msl	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	Dry
<b>Runway Used:</b>	35	<b>IFR Approach:</b>	Visual
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>	3200 ft / 50 ft	<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	Traffic pattern

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	2 Fatal	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	3 Fatal	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	On-ground
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	5 Fatal	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	32.150245,-94.330841(est)

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Roth, Eugene
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	GROVER CROCKER; DALLAS , TX
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	November 28, 1989
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class</a>
<b>Note:</b>	
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=22562">https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=22562</a>

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.

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