



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	NEWCASTLE, Oklahoma	Accident Number:	FTW91FA030
Date & Time:	January 14, 1991, 22:44 Local	Registration:	N7201E
Aircraft:	MOONEY 20J	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	4 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

DURING A NIGHT BACK COURSE LOCALIZER APPROACH UNDER INSTRUMENT METEOROLOGICAL CONDITIONS, THE INSTRUMENT-RATED PRIVATE PILOT LOST CONTROL OF HIS AIRCRAFT AND IMPACTED INTO A MUDDY WHEAT FIELD. THE PILOT HAD REQUESTED THE APPROACH AFTER ATTEMPTING TO VISUALLY LAND AT THE AIRPORT. THE PILOT WAS VECTORED TO FINAL AND FLEW THROUGH THE LOCALIZER. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT HE WAS ON THE CORRECT FREQUENCY. HE WAS OBSERVED TURNING AND FLYING AWAY FROM THE COURSE LINE JUST PRIOR TO THE LOSS OF CONTROL. HE HAD STATED THAT HE WAS BELOW THE CLOUDS PRIOR TO ATTEMPTING THE INSTRUMENT APPROACH.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: THE PILOT'S FAILURE TO MAINTAIN AIRCRAFT CONTROL. FACTORS WERE SPATIAL DISORIENTATION, IMPROPER IFR PROCEDURES, AND THE DARK NIGHT WITH LOW CEILINGS AND RAIN.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: APPROACH

Findings

1. (F) LIGHT CONDITION - DARK NIGHT
2. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - RAIN
3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - LOW CEILING
4. (F) IFR PROCEDURE - NOT FOLLOWED - PILOT IN COMMAND
5. (C) AIRCRAFT CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
6. (F) SPATIAL DISORIENTATION - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	58, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	April 3, 1990
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	4400 hours (Total, all aircraft), 4274 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	MOONEY	Registration:	N7201E
Model/Series:	20J 20J	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:		Serial Number:	24-0596
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	April 1, 1990 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2740 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	53 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	2670 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	IO-360-A3B6D
Registered Owner:	JAMES D. WOODWARD	Rated Power:	200 Horsepower
Operator:	JAMES D. WOODWARD	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:		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	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 600 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	9 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	10°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	8°C / 7°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	Light - None - Drizzle		
Departure Point:	WOODWARD , OK (WWR)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Destination:	OKLAHOMA CITY , OK (OKC)	Type of Clearance:	IFR
Departure Time:	21:45 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	WILL ROGERS WORLD OKC	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	1295 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Wet
Runway Used:	35	IFR Approach:	LOC-backcourse
Runway Length/Width:	9800 ft / 150 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	3 Fatal	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	4 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	35.240936,-97.59008(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Wall, O.
Additional Participating Persons:	L. COOK; OKLAHOMA CITY , OK
Original Publish Date:	March 24, 1993
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=23243

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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](#).