



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	NEAR SKWENTNA, Alaska	Accident Number:	ANC93LA140
Date & Time:	August 8, 1993, 12:45 Local	Registration:	N97978
Aircraft:	STINSON 108-2	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE PILOT, WHO HAD 5 HOURS EXPERIENCE IN MAKE/MODEL, MISJUDGED THE LENGTH OF TAKEOFF RUN NEEDED BY HIS NEWLY-ACQUIRED FLOAT PLANE. ABORTING THE TAKEOFF ATTEMPT, THE PILOT ELECTED TO DITCH IN A SWAMP AT THE END OF THE LAKE.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: THE PILOT IN COMMAND'S INADEQUATE PREFLIGHT PLANNING AND PREPARATION. A FACTOR IN THE ACCIDENT WAS THE PILOT'S LACK OF FAMILIARITY WITH THE PARTICULAR AIRCRAFT'S PERFORMANCE.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - ABORTED

Findings

1. (C) PREFLIGHT PLANNING/PREPARATION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) LACK OF FAMILIARITY WITH AIRCRAFT - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

On August 8, 1993, at approximately 1245 Alaska daylight time, a float-equipped Stinson 108-2, with a 190 horsepower conversion, N97978, crashed on takeoff from an unnamed lake, approximately 50 miles west of Anchorage, Alaska. The accident location is near Skwentna. The airline transport rated pilot, operating under 14 CFR Part 91, personal, was departing the 2000 foot lake, with one passenger. Visual conditions existed and no flight plan was filed. Neither occupant were injured, however the airplane was substantially damaged.

The pilot told the NTSB and the FAA that he had about 5 hours experience in the airplane since purchase and about 100 hours on floats in a Champion airplane. He said the airplane seemed to be performing normally, but that he misjudged the length of takeoff run required and that "it just wouldn't fly, and I put it in the swamp at the end of the lake". The pilot described the damage to include a bent spar in the right wing, damaged floats, and leading edge damage on the left wing. A small fire in the engine compartment was reportedly extinguished by the pilot after the crash.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline transport	Age:	34, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	October 27, 1992
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	6200 hours (Total, all aircraft), 5 hours (Total, this make and model), 2300 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 207 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 62 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	STINSON	Registration:	N97978
Model/Series:	108-2 108-2	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	108-975
Landing Gear Type:	Float	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	August 7, 1992 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2235 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	15 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	2400 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	O-435-1
Registered Owner:	GEO WOOLIVER & C. NICKERSON	Rated Power:	180 Horsepower
Operator:	WOOLIVER, GEO & NICKERSON, C.	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:	12:45 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	40 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	6 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	90°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	26°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	ANCHORAGE , AK (LHD)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	12:45 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:		Runway Surface Type:	Water
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	Water-calm
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	
Runway Length/Width:	0 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Fire:	On-ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 None	Latitude, Longitude:	61.92987,-151.729965(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Herlihy, Douglas
Additional Participating Persons:	JAMES C HEIRSTON; ANCHORAGE , AK
Original Publish Date:	December 2, 1994
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=2399

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](#).