



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	PHOENIX, Arizona	Accident Number:	LAX84LA231
Date & Time:	March 23, 1984, 18:30 Local	Registration:	N36104
Aircraft:	BALLOON WORKS FLY 8-24	FIRE	Aircraft Damage: Minor
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 Serious, 3 Minor, 1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Aerial observation		

Analysis

THE PLT TOOK OFF ON A SIGHT-SEEING BALLOON FLT WITH 5 PASSENGERS WHOSE AGES WERE REPORTEDLY FROM 65 TO 83 YRS OLD. ABOUT 1 HR & 15 MINS LATER, HE LANDED ON DESERT TERRAIN IN WINDS THAT HE ESTIMATED WERE APRX 10 KTS GUSTING TO 15 KTS. DURING TOUCHDOWN, THE BASKET DESCEND INTO VEGETATION & TIPPED OVER ONTO ITS SIDE. THE PLT HAD INSTRUCTED THE PASSENGERS TO MOVE TO THE BACK OF THE BASKET, BRACE THEMSELVES & TO SQUAT DOWN JUST PRIOR TO TOUCHDOWN. HOWEVER, SEVERAL PASSENGERS STOOD UP & EXTENDED THEIR ARMS UPWARD TO BRACE THEMSELVES. WHEN THE BASKET TIPPED OVER, 1 OF THE PASSENGER'S ARMS WAS CAUGHT BENEATH IT. SEVERAL OTHER PASSENGERS FELL ON TOP OF THE OTHERS. ONE OF THE PASSENGERS SUFFERED A BROKEN WRIST; ANOTHER SUFFERED 3 BROKEN RIBS. THE SERIOUSLY INJURED PASSENGERS WERE 70 & 83 YRS OF AGE.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

Findings

Occurrence #1: HARD LANDING
Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

1. (C) PLANNING/DECISION - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - ROUGH/UNEVEN
3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - HIGH WIND
4. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - GUSTS
5. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - HIGH VEGETATION

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Private	Age:	37, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Balloon	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	August 3, 1983
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	1986 hours (Total, all aircraft), 18 hours (Total, this make and model), 1829 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 42 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 27 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	BALLOON WORKS	Registration:	N36104
Model/Series:	FIRE FLY 8-24 FIRE FLY 8	Aircraft Category:	Balloon
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	F8-006
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	November 3, 1983 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	
Time Since Last Inspection:	23 Hrs	Engines:	Unknown
Airframe Total Time:	123 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	WICKS ENTERPRISE, INC.	Rated Power:	
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:	AIRIAL BALLOON CO	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:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	60 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	10 knots / 15 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	40°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	26°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	GLENDALE , AZ	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	17:15 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

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

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Minor
Passenger Injuries:	2 Serious, 3 Minor	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 Serious, 3 Minor, 1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	33.619583,-112.170463(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Pollack, Wayne
Additional Participating Persons:	BARRY PHILLIPS; SCOTTSDALE , AZ
Original Publish Date:	
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=24212

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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](#).