



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	GLENDALE, Arizona	Accident Number:	LAX84LA257
Date & Time:	April 15, 1984, 08:00 Local	Registration:	N5717H
Aircraft:	RAVEN S-55A-707	Aircraft Damage:	None
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Serious, 1 Minor, 1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation		

Analysis

DURING A SIGHT-SEEING FLT, THE WINDS, OUTSIDE AIR TEMP & PROPANE GAS BURNER TEMP BEGAN INCREASING, SO THE PLT ELECTED TO LAND. HE NOTIFIED THE CHASE CREW, STARTED A DESCENT & ANTICIPATED MAKING A 'DROP LINE' LANDING. AS THE BALLOON BEGAN CROSSING OVER A DRY RIVER AT ABOUT 200 FT AGL, IT WAS DESCENDING AT APRX 75 FT/MIN. THE PLT STATED THAT AT ABOUT THAT TIME, A DOWNDRAFT FORCED THE BALLOON TO THE RIVER BED, THEN THE WIND DRAGGED IT INTO THE RIVER BANK. OBSERVERS SAID THE TOP OF THE BALLOON WAS SUDDENLY DISTORTED FROM DOWNDRAFT. THE PLT STATED EVERYTHING WAS NORMAL, THEN 'THE WIND HIT THE BALLOON' & THERE WERE 'NO TREES, FLAGS, SMOKE OR DUST TO ANTICIPATE THE WIND SHEAR.'

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. (C) WEATHER EVALUATION - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - DOWNDRAFT
3. (C) WEATHER CONDITION - WINDSHEAR

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: LANDING

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	67,Female
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Center
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Balloon	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Unknown None	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	309 hours (Total, all aircraft), 309 hours (Total, this make and model), 291 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 21 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	RAVEN	Registration:	N5717H
Model/Series:	S-55A-707 S-55A-707	Aircraft Category:	Balloon
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	S-55A-707
Landing Gear Type:		Seats:	1
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	November 18, 1984 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1435 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	91 Hrs	Engines:	Unknown
Airframe Total Time:	352 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	DIANE THOMAS	Rated Power:	
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	
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:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	25 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	8 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	225°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	24°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	00:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:		Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	None
Passenger Injuries:	1 Serious, 1 Minor	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Serious, 1 Minor, 1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Llorente, A.

Additional Participating Persons:

Original Publish Date:

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=24234>

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](#).