



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	PEORIA, Arizona	Accident Number:	LAX87LA070
Date & Time:	December 27, 1986, 09:30 Local	Registration:	N5561P
Aircraft:	RAVEN S55A/AX7	Aircraft Damage:	Minor
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Serious, 2 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

PRIOR TO LIFT-OFF THE PILOT NOTED THAT THE WIND CONDITIONS WERE CALM. DURING THE FLIGHT, THE SURFACE WINDS BEGAN TO INCREASE. THE PILOT PREPARED HIS PASSENGERS FOR A HIGH WIND LANDING AND BEGAN TO LIGHTLY VENT OFF HOT AIR. THE BALLOON BEGAN DESCENDING AT APPROXIMATELY 500 FPM. THE PILOT OPENED BOTH VENTS UNTIL IMPACT. ONE PASSENGER WAS THROWN OUT, BUT HUNG ONTO THE GONDOLO. WHEN THE PASSENGER LET GO, THE BALLOON BECAME AIRBORNE. THE BALLOON THEN TOUCHED-DOWN A SECOND TIME AND DRAGGED TO A STOP.

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: CRUISE - NORMAL

Findings

1. (C) WEATHER CONDITION - HIGH WIND

Occurrence #2: HARD LANDING

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - NORMAL

Findings

2. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - OPEN FIELD

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	51, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Balloon	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	None Unknown	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	145 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	RAVEN	Registration:	N5561P
Model/Series:	S55A/AX7 S55A/AX7	Aircraft Category:	Balloon
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	S55A-544
Landing Gear Type:	Hull	Seats:	
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	October 14, 1986 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1430 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	8 Hrs	Engines:	Unknown
Airframe Total Time:	180 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	unknown
ELT:		Engine Model/Series:	UNK
Registered Owner:	THOMAS W. TOPE	Rated Power:	
Operator:		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:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	25 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	25 knots / 25 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	23°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	6°C / 1°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	GLENDALE , AZ	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	PEORIA , AZ	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	08:30 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:		Runway Surface Type:	Dirt
Airport Elevation:	0 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	0 ft / 0 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Minor
Passenger Injuries:	1 Serious, 1 Minor	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Serious, 2 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	33.569282,-112.249816(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Eckrote, Debra

Additional Participating Persons: BERRY PHILLIPS; SCOTTSDALE ,AZ

Original Publish Date:

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=25492>

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](#).