



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	NIKOLAI, Alaska	<b>Accident Number:</b>	ANC95LA005
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	October 21, 1994, 13:30 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N1428H
<b>Aircraft:</b>	AERONCA SEDAN AR-15	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	1 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation		

## Analysis

DURING A CROSS-COUNTRY FLIGHT, THE PILOT WAS FLYING IN MODERATE FALLING SNOW CONDITIONS FOR ABOUT 30 MINUTES AND EXPERIENCED A LOSS OF ENGINE POWER. THE PILOT COULD NOT MAINTAIN ALTITUDE AND PERFORMED A FORCED LANDING. DURING THE LANDING ROLL, THE LANDING GEAR STRUCK A LOG, DAMAGING THE GEAR AND FUSELAGE. AFTER LANDING, THE PILOT ATTEMPTED TO DRAIN FUEL FROM THE FUEL TANKS AND HEARD AIR BEING SUCKED INTO THE TANKS UNTIL THE INTERNAL PRESSURE OF THE TANKS EQUALIZED. THE AIRPLANE'S FUEL SYSTEM VENTS ARE LOCATED ON THE BELLY OF THE FUSELAGE.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: THE PILOT'S CONTINUED FLIGHT INTO ADVERSE WEATHER. FACTORS TO THE ACCIDENT WERE FALLING SNOW, AN OBSTRUCTION OF THE FUEL SYSTEM VENTS, RESTRICTION OF THE FUEL FLOW AND LACK OF A SUITABLE LANDING AREA.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(PARTIAL) - NONMECHANICAL  
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings

1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - SNOW
  2. (F) FUEL SYSTEM, VENT - OBSTRUCTED
  3. (F) FLUID, FUEL - FLOW RESTRICTED
  4. (C) FLIGHT INTO ADVERSE WEATHER - CONTINUED - PILOT IN COMMAND
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Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING  
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY DESCENT/LANDING

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Occurrence #3: ON GROUND/WATER COLLISION WITH OBJECT  
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY DESCENT/LANDING

Findings

5. OBJECT - TREE(S)
6. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - NONE SUITABLE

## Factual Information

On October 21, 1994 at 1330 Alaska daylight time, a wheel equipped Aeronca Sedan, AR-15 airplane, N1428H, registered to and operated by the Pilot, was forced to land on a gravel bar after a loss of power, and struck a log during the landing roll, near Nikolai, Alaska. The business flight, operating under 14 CFR Part 91, departed Willow, Alaska, and the destination was Takotna, Alaska. No flight plan was filed but the Pilot's wife was aware of the route of flight. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed. The airplane was substantially damaged and the Pilot, the sole occupant, was not injured.

According to the Pilot, while he was in cruise flight the engine began to lose power. He was unable to keep the engine running and landed on a gravel bar on the South Fork of the Kuskokwim River. During the landing roll he struck a log and damaged the landing gear and the lower longerines of the fuselage. The Pilot stated he attempted to drain a fuel sample from the wing tanks and when he depressed the fuel drain, the fuel tank sucked air. He was able to hear the air gurgle in the fuel tank until the pressure equalized. The Pilot stated that the fuel tank vents are on the belly of the airplane and he had been flying through wet snow for the previous 30 minutes.

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Airline transport; Flight instructor	<b>Age:</b>	39, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	Airplane single-engine; Instrument airplane	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 1 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	June 1, 1994
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	UNK	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	7000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 140 hours (Total, this make and model), 6950 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 50 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 25 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	AERONCA	<b>Registration:</b>	N1428H
<b>Model/Series:</b>	SEDAN AR-15 SEDAN AR-1	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	S15AC489
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Tailwheel	<b>Seats:</b>	4
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	January 24, 1994 Annual	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	2050 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	119 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	2900 Hrs	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	CONTINENTAL
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	O-300
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	WARNER, BONNIE	<b>Rated Power:</b>	145 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>	WARNER, WALT	<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None
<b>Operator Does Business As:</b>		<b>Operator Designator Code:</b>	

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual (VMC)	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>		<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Observation Time:</b>		<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Unknown	<b>Visibility</b>	5 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	Overcast / 4000 ft AGL	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	/	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	0°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>		<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	Moderate - None - Snow		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	WILLOW , AK (Z22 )	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>	TAKOTNA , AK (TCT )	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	11:15 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class G

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>		<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>		<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	
<b>Runway Used:</b>	0	<b>IFR Approach:</b>	None
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>		<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	Forced landing

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>		<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	62.86956,-153.869979(est)

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Kobelnyk, George
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	BETTY ROGERS; ANCHORAGE , AK
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	June 29, 1995
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class</a>
<b>Note:</b>	
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=2606">https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=2606</a>

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