



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	VISALIA, California	Accident Number:	LAX88LA279
Date & Time:	August 3, 1988, 15:30 Local	Registration:	N9273M
Aircraft:	MOONEY M20E	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	4 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE PILOT REMOVED THE VACUUM PUMP FROM THE ENGINE PRIOR TO THE FLIGHT BECAUSE OF AN INTERNAL FAILURE IN THE PUMP. THE PILOT DID NOT INSTALL A COVER PLATE ON THE ACCESSORY MOUNTING HOLE VACATED BY THE PUMP. AFTER TAKEOFF ON THE LOCAL FLIGHT, THE PILOT NOTICED THE OIL PRESSURE WAS DROPPING AND THE TEMPERATURE WAS RISING. HE ELECTED TO RETURN TO THE AIRPORT. THE ENGINE SIEZED AND THE PILOT MADE A FORCED LANDING IN A COTTON FIELD.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(TOTAL) - NONMECHANICAL
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - NORMAL

Findings

1. (C) ENGINE ACCESSORIES, VACUUM PUMP - LACK OF
 2. (C) FLUID, OIL - LOSS, TOTAL
 3. (C) ENGINE ASSEMBLY - SEIZED
 4. (C) MAINTENANCE, MODIFICATION - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND
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Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - EMERGENCY

Occurrence #3: ON GROUND/WATER ENCOUNTER WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

- 5. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - NONE SUITABLE
- 6. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - HIGH VEGETATION

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	55, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	July 22, 1988
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	531 hours (Total, all aircraft), 466 hours (Total, this make and model), 500 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 16 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	MOONEY	Registration:	N9273M
Model/Series:	M20E M20E	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	1212
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	September 16, 1987 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2575 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	35 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	1629 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	IO-360-A1A
Registered Owner:	ITZACO, INC	Rated Power:	200 Horsepower
Operator:	STANFORD, WILLIAM L.	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	15 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	300°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	(VIS)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	(VIS)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	15:25 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	VIS	Runway Surface Type:	Dirt
Airport Elevation:	292 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Vegetation
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	0 ft / 0 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Forced landing

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	3 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	4 None	Latitude, Longitude:	36.289882,-119.379516(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Rich, Jeff

Additional Participating Persons: MAURICE FULKERSON; FRESNO , CA

Original Publish Date: November 7, 1989

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=26073>

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](#).