



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	PALM SPRINGS, California	Accident Number:	LAX91FA124
Date & Time:	March 7, 1991, 23:30 Local	Registration:	N711PE
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-32R-300	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 135: Air taxi & commuter - Non-scheduled		

Analysis

THE PILOT REPORTED FOR WORK AT 0200 HOURS AND FLEW ON A LEG OF A CARGO FLIGHT FROM BURBANK, CA TO PHOENIX, AZ. HE WENT TO A COMPANY APARTMENT FOR CREW REST ARRIVING THERE AT ABOUT 0600-0630. HE GOT ABOUT 5 HOURS SLEEP, WAKING AT ABOUT 1200 HOURS. HE FLEW THE RETURN LEG OF THE OPERATION, TAKING OFF AT 2055 HOURS. AT 2230 HOURS, AFTER MAINTAINING A CONSTANT AIRSPEED, HEADING, AND ALTITUDE, HE COLLIDED WITH A MOUNTAIN. THE MOUNTAIN WAS ABOUT 10 NAUTICAL MILES SOUTH OF HIS USUAL COURSE. NO EVIDENCE COULD BE FOUND TO INDICATE THE PILOT ATTEMPTED TO AVOID COLLIDING WITH THE MOUNTAIN. THE AIRCRAFT AND ALL COMPONENTS WERE EXAMINED, WITH NO DEFICIENCIES BEING NOTED. ANOTHER PILOT AT THE COMPANY APARTMENT REPORTED THAT A BOX OF 'DIMETAPP' DECONGESTION PILLS WERE ON THE PILOT'S SHAVING KIT AND THAT TWO PILLS WERE MISSING.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: INCAPACITATION OF THE PILOT DUE TO INADEQUATE SLEEP.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: CRUISE - NORMAL

Findings

1. (C) TERRAIN CONDITION - MOUNTAINOUS/HILLY
2. (C) INCAPACITATION - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) FATIGUE(LACK OF SLEEP) - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Flight instructor	Age:	23, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):		Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	May 22, 1990
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	2315 hours (Total, all aircraft), 228 hours (Total, this make and model), 2273 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 228 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 58 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N711PE
Model/Series:	PA-32R-300 PA-32R-300	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:		Serial Number:	32R-7680292
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	January 2, 2000 Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3600 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	IO-540-K1G50
Registered Owner:		Rated Power:	300 Horsepower
Operator:	WINGS EXPRESS, INC	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	Air cargo
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	AFQA

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Night/dark
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	20 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	0°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	PHOENIX , AZ (PHX)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	BURBANK , CA (BUR)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	20:55 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

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

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	On-ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	On-ground
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Childress, Richard
Additional Participating Persons:	CHARLES LITTLE; ROGER ADELMAN; KENT SMALLS; RIVERSIDE , CA
Original Publish Date:	July 13, 1993
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=26985

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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](#).