



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	COLD BAY, Alaska	Accident Number:	ANC96LA003
Date & Time:	October 7, 1995, 12:00 Local	Registration:	N64337
Aircraft:	CESSNA 180K	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Positioning		

Analysis

The pilot was positioning the float-equipped airplane in support of hunting clients. He circled a lagoon to assess the wind and water conditions. After landing, as the airplane was slowing off the step, the floats struck a submerged sand bar. The airplane nosed over but remained floating upside down. The pilot reported that overcast skies and the color of the lagoon bottom prevented him from seeing the sandbar.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the pilot's selection of an unsuitable area/terrain for landing. The submerged sandbar was a related factor.

Findings

Occurrence #1: ON GROUND/WATER ENCOUNTER WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: TAXI - FROM LANDING

Findings

1. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - HIDDEN OBSTRUCTION(S)
 2. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - SAND BAR
 3. (C) UNSUITABLE TERRAIN OR TAKEOFF/LANDING/TAXI AREA - SELECTED - PILOT IN COMMAND
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Occurrence #2: NOSE OVER
Phase of Operation: TAXI - FROM LANDING

Factual Information

On October 7, 1995, about 1200 Alaska daylight time, a float equipped Cessna 180K, N64337, collided with a sandbar while taxiing from landing, in Christianson Lagoon on Unimak Island, about 55 miles southwest of Cold Bay, Alaska. The airplane was being operated as a visual flight rules (VFR) local area positioning flight under Title 14 CFR Part 91 when the accident occurred. The airplane, operated by Clearwater Air Inc., Soldotna, Alaska, sustained substantial damage. The certificated commercial pilot, the sole occupant, was not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed. The flight departed from Bear Lake, Port Moller, Alaska, about 1045.

A Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) inspector, Anchorage Flight Standards District Office (FSDO), reported that the pilot was positioning the airplane in support of hunting clients. The pilot indicated that he circled the lagoon to assess the wind and water conditions. The pilot landed to the west and as the airplane was slowing off the step, the floats struck a submerged sand bar. The pilot reported that overcast skies and the color of the lagoon bottom prevented him from seeing the sand bar. After colliding with the sandbar, the airplane nosed over but remained floating upside down. The airplane received damage to the vertical stabilizer and rudder.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	43, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	October 2, 1995
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	8000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 800 hours (Total, this make and model), 7500 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 225 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 30 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	CESSNA	Registration:	N64337
Model/Series:	180K 180K	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	18052891
Landing Gear Type:	Float	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	September 28, 1995 100 hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3190 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	20 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	4470 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	CONTINENTAL
ELT:	Installed, activated, aided in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	O-520
Registered Owner:	CLEARWATER AIR INC.	Rated Power:	270 Horsepower
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	On-demand air taxi (135)
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	LAMA

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:	Unknown	Visibility	20 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 1500 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	20 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	270°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	10°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	PORT MOLLER , AK	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	10:45 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

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

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	55.219032,-162.779769(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Erickson, Scott
Additional Participating Persons:	SPENCER HILL; ANCHORAGE , AK
Original Publish Date:	August 20, 1996
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=2778

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