



Aviation Investigation Final Report

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| Location: | KELSO, California | Accident Number: | LAX93FA024 |
| Date & Time: | October 30, 1992, 19:25 Local | Registration: | N7902P |
| Aircraft: | PIPER PA-24-180 | Aircraft Damage: | Destroyed |
| Defining Event: | | Injuries: | 2 Fatal |
| Flight Conducted Under: | Part 91: General aviation - Personal | | |

Analysis

A PIPER PA-24-180 COLLIDED WITH LEVEL DESERT TERRAIN. RESIDENTS OF A NEARBY TOWN REPORTED SEVERE WEATHER CONDITIONS ON THE EVENING OF ACCIDENT. THE NONINSTRUMENT RATED CERTIFICATED PRIVATE PILOT RECEIVED A 15 MINUTE ELECTRONIC WEATHER BRIEFING FROM DUAT SERVICES. THE BRIEFING INCLUDED FLIGHT PRECAUTIONS FOR MOUNTAIN OBSCURATION, ICING, AND TURBULENCE ALONG THE REQUESTED FLIGHT ROUTING. AIRMETS HAD BEEN ISSUED FOR INSTRUMENT FLIGHT RULES CONDITIONS, MOUNTAIN OBSCURATION AND TURBULENCE. THE WRECKAGE EXAMINATION DISCLOSED THE AIRPLANE STRUCK THE GROUND IN A LEFT WING DOWN AND NOSE LEVEL ATTITUDE. PAPER FROM THE PILOT'S DUAT WEATHER BRIEFING WAS FOUND ON THE ENGINE EXHAUST SYSTEM AT THE ACCIDENT SITE. THE PAPER WAS BURNED IN THE AREA WHERE IT WAS TOUCHING THE EXHAUST SYSTEM AND WRINKLED FROM BEING WET.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: THE PILOT'S POOR PREFLIGHT PLANNING; HIS INADEQUATE WEATHER EVALUATION; AND HIS INTENTIONAL VFR FLIGHT INTO INSTRUMENT METEOROLOGICAL CONDITIONS. CONTRIBUTING TO THE ACCIDENT WAS THE TURBULENCE, RAIN AND LOW CLOUDS.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

Findings

1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - TURBULENCE
2. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - RAIN
3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - CLOUDS
4. TERRAIN CONDITION - OPEN FIELD
5. (C) PREFLIGHT PLANNING/PREPARATION - POOR - PILOT IN COMMAND
6. (C) WEATHER EVALUATION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
7. (C) VFR FLIGHT INTO IMC - INTENTIONAL - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

Pilot Information

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| Certificate: | Commercial | Age: | 46, Male |
| Airplane Rating(s): | Single-engine land; Multi-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: | Yes |
| Medical Certification: | Class 2 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim | Last FAA Medical Exam: | July 22, 1992 |
| Occupational Pilot: | No | Last Flight Review or Equivalent: | |
| Flight Time: | 1303 hours (Total, all aircraft), 80 hours (Total, this make and model), 1250 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft) | | |

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

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|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Aircraft Make: | PIPER | Registration: | N7902P |
| Model/Series: | PA-24-180 PA-24-180 | Aircraft Category: | Airplane |
| Year of Manufacture: | | Amateur Built: | |
| Airworthiness Certificate: | Normal | Serial Number: | 3132 |
| Landing Gear Type: | Retractable - Tricycle | Seats: | 4 |
| Date/Type of Last Inspection: | November 1, 1991 Annual | Certified Max Gross Wt.: | 2550 lbs |
| Time Since Last Inspection: | 94 Hrs | Engines: | 1 Reciprocating |
| Airframe Total Time: | 5651 Hrs | Engine Manufacturer: | LYCOMING |
| ELT: | Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident | Engine Model/Series: | O-360-A1D |
| Registered Owner: | SNIDER, DANNY G. | Rated Power: | 180 Horsepower |
| Operator: | SNIDER, DANNY G. | Operating Certificate(s) Held: | None |
| Operator Does Business As: | | Operator Designator Code: | |

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

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|---|---------------------|---|------------|
| Conditions at Accident Site: | Instrument (IMC) | Condition of Light: | Night/dark |
| Observation Facility, Elevation: | | Distance from Accident Site: | |
| Observation Time: | | Direction from Accident Site: | |
| Lowest Cloud Condition: | Unknown | Visibility | |
| Lowest Ceiling: | | Visibility (RVR): | |
| Wind Speed/Gusts: | / | Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Wind Direction: | 0° | Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Altimeter Setting: | | Temperature/Dew Point: | |
| Precipitation and Obscuration: | Heavy - None - Rain | | |
| Departure Point: | OXNARD , CA (OXR) | Type of Flight Plan Filed: | None |
| Destination: | WASHINGTON , OK | Type of Clearance: | None |
| Departure Time: | 16:21 Local | Type of Airspace: | Class G |

Airport Information

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|-----------------------------|---|----------------------------------|------|
| 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

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|----------------------------|---------|-----------------------------|-----------|
| Crew Injuries: | 1 Fatal | Aircraft Damage: | Destroyed |
| Passenger Injuries: | 1 Fatal | Aircraft Fire: | None |
| Ground Injuries: | N/A | Aircraft Explosion: | None |
| Total Injuries: | 2 Fatal | Latitude, Longitude: | |

Administrative Information

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| Investigator In Charge (IIC): | Wilcox, Thomas |
| Additional Participating Persons: | ASI JAMES DAIGLE; LAS VEGAS , NV ASI LEON LINDSAY; LAS VEGAS , NV CHARLES LITTLE; CHINO , CA |
| Original Publish Date: | September 14, 1993 |
| Last Revision Date: | |
| Investigation Class: | Class |
| Note: | |
| Investigation Docket: | https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=27808 |

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](#).