



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	SANTA PAULA, California	Accident Number:	LAX94LA055
Date & Time:	November 20, 1993, 19:15 Local	Registration:	N6405Q
Aircraft:	MOONEY M20B	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE PILOT WAS COMPLETING A NIGHT VISUAL FLIGHT RULES PERSONAL FLIGHT AT HIS HOME AIRPORT. THE AIRPORT IS NOT EQUIPPED WITH A RUNWAY/AIRPORT LIGHTING SYSTEM AND NIGHT OPERATIONS ARE PROHIBITED. WHILE ON FINAL APPROACH, THE PILOT BECAME DISTRACTED BY TWO AUTOMOBILES NEAR THE APPROACH END OF THE RUNWAY. THIS DISTRACTION CAUSED THE PILOT TO DESCEND BELOW THE NORMAL GLIDE PATH. WHEN THE PILOT REALIZED HE WAS TOO LOW, HE BEGAN A GO-AROUND. THE AIRPLANE'S LEFT WING STRUCK A POWER POLE GUY WIRE AS IT BEGAN TO CLIMB.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: THE PILOT'S FAILURE TO FOLLOW PROPER PROCEDURES/DIRECTIVES PROHIBITING NIGHT OPERATIONS AT THE AIRPORT AND FAILURE TO MAINTAIN THE PROPER GLIDEPATH. THE PILOT'S DIVERTED ATTENTION WAS A FACTOR IN THIS ACCIDENT.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: GO-AROUND (VFR)

Findings

1. OBJECT - GUY WIRE
2. (C) PROCEDURES/DIRECTIVES - NOT FOLLOWED - PILOT IN COMMAND

3. (C) PROPER GLIDEPATH - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (F) DIVERTED ATTENTION - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

On November 20, 1993, at 1915 hours Pacific standard time, a Mooney M20B, N6405Q, collided with a power pole guy wire while on final approach to runway 04 at Santa Paula Airport, Santa Paula, California. The pilot was competing a visual flight rules personal flight. The airplane, owned and operated by the pilot, sustained substantial damage. The certificated private pilot, the sole occupant, sustained minor injuries. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed. The flight originated at Whiteman Airport, Pacoima, California, at 1855 hours.

Mr. Thomas Mangum, Principal Operations Inspector, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Van Nuys [California] Flight Standards District Office, reported that the pilot admitted that "he was too low" while on final approach to the airport. Inspector Mangum reported that 24 inches of the airplane's left wing severed when it struck the power pole guy wire.

The pilot told Inspector Mangum that he purchased the airplane on November 5, 1993. Inspector Mangum said that the pilot was not listed as the registered owner in the FAA Aircraft Records Section, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Inspector Mangum also said that the airplane is based at Santa Paula Airport.

The pilot said that clear skies existed, but that it was a dark night.

The pilot submitted a Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident Report, NTSB Form 6120.1/2, to the National Transportation Safety Board. The pilot stated in the report that while on final approach he became distracted by two automobiles with their lights on that were near the approach end of the runway. He said that this distraction caused him to allow the airplane to get too low.

When the pilot realized he was too low, he added power and began a go-around. As the airplane began to climb, its left wing struck the power pole guy wire.

Santa Paula Airport is not equipped with any runway lighting systems. According to the Department of Commerce, Airport/Facility Directory, night operations at Santa Paula Airport are prohibited.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	66, 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--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	June 30, 1993
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	326 hours (Total, all aircraft), 26 hours (Total, this make and model), 326 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 109 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 36 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	MOONEY	Registration:	N6405Q
Model/Series:	M20B M20B	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	670145
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	November 19, 1992 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2575 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-360-A1D
Registered Owner:		Rated Power:	180 Horsepower
Operator:	HELLNER, JOHN F.	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:	Night/dark
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	30 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	0°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	7°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	PACOIMA , CA (WHP)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	18:55 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	SANTA PAULA SZP	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	245 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	4	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	2650 ft / 40 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Go around

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	34.399005,-119.069625(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Llorente, A.

Additional Participating Persons: THOMAS MANGUM; VAN NUYS, CA

Original Publish Date: September 13, 1994

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=28607>

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](#).