



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

|                                |                                      |                         |             |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Location:</b>               | RUBIDOUX, California                 | <b>Accident Number:</b> | LAX95LA244  |
| <b>Date &amp; Time:</b>        | July 9, 1995, 10:35 Local            | <b>Registration:</b>    | N2529A      |
| <b>Aircraft:</b>               | PIPER PA-38-112                      | <b>Aircraft Damage:</b> | Substantial |
| <b>Defining Event:</b>         |                                      | <b>Injuries:</b>        | 2 None      |
| <b>Flight Conducted Under:</b> | Part 91: General aviation - Personal |                         |             |

## Analysis

AFTER TAKEOFF THE AIRCRAFT WAS UNABLE TO CLIMB ABOVE 50 FEET AGL. THE AIRCRAFT STRUCK UTILITY LINES ABOUT 1.5 MILES FROM THE END OF THE RUNWAY. FAA INSPECTORS STATED THAT THE PILOT DID NOT KNOW THE EMPTY WEIGHT OF THE AIRCRAFT AND HAD NOT COMPUTED AN AIRCRAFT WEIGHT AND BALANCE. THE PILOT TOLD DEPUTIES THAT HE COULD NOT CLIMB BECAUSE HE WAS OVER GROSS WEIGHT.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the pilot's inadequate preflight planning/preparation in that he attempted to fly an aircraft without first verifying the aircraft's gross weight and published performance capabilities.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT  
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

### Findings

1. OBJECT - WIRE, TRANSMISSION
  2. (C) PREFLIGHT PLANNING/PREPARATION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
  3. (C) AIRCRAFT WEIGHT AND BALANCE - EXCEEDED - PILOT IN COMMAND
  4. CLIMB - NOT ATTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
-

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER  
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

## Factual Information

On July 9, 1995, at 1035 hours Pacific daylight time, a Piper PA-38-112, N2529A, sustained substantial damage after striking utility lines during takeoff at Rubidoux, California. The aircraft was owned and operated by the pilot and was on a local flight. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and no flight plan had been filed. Neither the private pilot nor his passenger was injured. The flight originated from the Flabob airport at 1034 on the day of the accident.

The pilot reported that after liftoff from runway 24, the aircraft rate of climb leveled off when he reached approximately 50 feet agl. He stated that in spite of his continued efforts to maintain a climb airspeed and attitude, the aircraft eventually struck overhead utility lines situated on rising terrain about 1.5 miles from the departure end of the runway. The downed utility lines ignited a grass fire.

The pilot also stated that although he was able to maintain about 63 knots (IAS), he was unwilling to turn back toward the airport since he believed any attempted turns at that airspeed would have resulted in a stall/spin.

FAA inspectors stated that the pilot did not know the empty weight of the aircraft and had not computed an aircraft weight and balance. It was also unknown how many gallons of fuel were onboard at the time of departure. The pilot stated that he weighed 180 pounds and that his passenger weighed between 210 and 220 pounds. The Riverside County Deputy Sheriff, who had responded to the scene, reported that the pilot told him "I was over gross weight and couldn't climb."

The Riverside weather observation did not include temperature as part of the 1046 weather observation; however, the Ontario weather observation included 86 degrees as the current temperature at 1046. Density altitude based on the Ontario temperature and corrected for the Riverside non-standard pressure was 3,670 feet. Winds were reported from 270 degrees at 5 knots.

The inspector said the tires of the tricycle gear aircraft appeared underinflated.

## Pilot Information

|                                  |                                                                        |                                          |                 |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Certificate:</b>              | Private                                                                | <b>Age:</b>                              | 35, Male        |
| <b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>       | Single-engine land                                                     | <b>Seat Occupied:</b>                    | Left            |
| <b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b> | None                                                                   | <b>Restraint Used:</b>                   |                 |
| <b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>     | None                                                                   | <b>Second Pilot Present:</b>             | No              |
| <b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>     | None                                                                   | <b>Toxicology Performed:</b>             | No              |
| <b>Medical Certification:</b>    | Class 3 Valid Medical-w/<br>waivers/lim                                | <b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>            | October 4, 1993 |
| <b>Occupational Pilot:</b>       | No                                                                     | <b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b> |                 |
| <b>Flight Time:</b>              | 120 hours (Total, all aircraft), 50 hours (Total, this make and model) |                                          |                 |

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

|                                      |                         |                                       |                 |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Aircraft Make:</b>                | PIPER                   | <b>Registration:</b>                  | N2529A          |
| <b>Model/Series:</b>                 | PA-38-112 PA-38-112     | <b>Aircraft Category:</b>             | Airplane        |
| <b>Year of Manufacture:</b>          |                         | <b>Amateur Built:</b>                 |                 |
| <b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>    | Normal                  | <b>Serial Number:</b>                 | 38-78A0732      |
| <b>Landing Gear Type:</b>            | Tricycle                | <b>Seats:</b>                         | 2               |
| <b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b> | November 1, 1994 Annual | <b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>       | 1670 lbs        |
| <b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>   | 94 Hrs                  | <b>Engines:</b>                       | 1 Reciprocating |
| <b>Airframe Total Time:</b>          | 3342 Hrs                | <b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>           | LYCOMING        |
| <b>ELT:</b>                          | Installed, activated    | <b>Engine Model/Series:</b>           | O-235-L2C       |
| <b>Registered Owner:</b>             | JOHN P. DIBBLE          | <b>Rated Power:</b>                   | 112 Horsepower  |
| <b>Operator:</b>                     |                         | <b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b> | None            |
| <b>Operator Does Business As:</b>    |                         | <b>Operator Designator Code:</b>      |                 |

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

|                                         |                   |                                             |                  |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>     | Visual (VMC)      | <b>Condition of Light:</b>                  | Day              |
| <b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b> | RAL ,816 ft msl   | <b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>         | 2 Nautical Miles |
| <b>Observation Time:</b>                | 10:46 Local       | <b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>        | 210°             |
| <b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>          |                   | <b>Visibility</b>                           | 5 miles          |
| <b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>                  | None              | <b>Visibility (RVR):</b>                    |                  |
| <b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>                | 5 knots /         | <b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>     | /                |
| <b>Wind Direction:</b>                  | 270°              | <b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b> | /                |
| <b>Altimeter Setting:</b>               | 29 inches Hg      | <b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>               |                  |
| <b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>   | N/A - None - Haze |                                             |                  |
| <b>Departure Point:</b>                 | (RIR )            | <b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>           | None             |
| <b>Destination:</b>                     |                   | <b>Type of Clearance:</b>                   | None             |
| <b>Departure Time:</b>                  | 10:34 Local       | <b>Type of Airspace:</b>                    | Class E          |

## Airport Information

|                             |                 |                                  |                |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Airport:</b>             | FLABOB RIR      | <b>Runway Surface Type:</b>      | Asphalt        |
| <b>Airport Elevation:</b>   | 764 ft msl      | <b>Runway Surface Condition:</b> | Dry            |
| <b>Runway Used:</b>         | 24              | <b>IFR Approach:</b>             |                |
| <b>Runway Length/Width:</b> | 3200 ft / 50 ft | <b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>     | Forced landing |

## Wreckage and Impact Information

|                            |        |                             |             |
|----------------------------|--------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Crew Injuries:</b>      | 1 None | <b>Aircraft Damage:</b>     | Substantial |
| <b>Passenger Injuries:</b> | 1 None | <b>Aircraft Fire:</b>       | None        |
| <b>Ground Injuries:</b>    | N/A    | <b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>  | None        |
| <b>Total Injuries:</b>     | 2 None | <b>Latitude, Longitude:</b> |             |

## Administrative Information

|                                          |                                                                                                         |
|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>     | Crispin, Robert                                                                                         |
| <b>Additional Participating Persons:</b> | JARED M WEAVER; RIVERSIDE , CA                                                                          |
| <b>Original Publish Date:</b>            | January 29, 1996                                                                                        |
| <b>Last Revision Date:</b>               |                                                                                                         |
| <b>Investigation Class:</b>              | <a href="#">Class</a>                                                                                   |
| <b>Note:</b>                             |                                                                                                         |
| <b>Investigation Docket:</b>             | <a href="https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=29145">https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=29145</a> |

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](#).