



Aviation Investigation Final Report

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|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| Location: | MINDEN, Nevada | Accident Number: | LAX96LA135 |
| Date & Time: | March 14, 1996, 11:00 Local | Registration: | N851BG |
| Aircraft: | Burkhart Grob G102 | Aircraft Damage: | Substantial |
| Defining Event: | | Injuries: | 1 None |
| Flight Conducted Under: | Part 91: General aviation - Personal | | |

Analysis

The pilot reported that he received a weather briefing which indicated the possibility of ridge lift. Following a normal takeoff and climb, he released from the tow plane, when the glider was at about 7,000 feet mean sea level (msl), 4 miles from the 4,718 foot msl airport, and 2 miles from the ridge. The pilot further reported that he encountered some ridge lift, but experienced a fairly substantial sink rate by the time he had descended to 6,200 feet msl. The rate of sink increased, and he realized that he was not high enough to return to the airport. The pilot made a forced landing in a soft, muddy dirt field, about 0.25 mile from the airport. During rollout, the glider collided with a dirt berm.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the pilot's misjudgment of distance and altitude from the airport, which resulted in an off-airport forced landing.

Findings

Occurrence #1: FORCED LANDING
Phase of Operation: APPROACH

Findings

1. WEATHER CONDITION - NO THERMAL LIFT
2. (C) DISTANCE/ALTITUDE - MISJUDGED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: ON GROUND/WATER ENCOUNTER WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY DESCENT/LANDING

Findings

- 3. TERRAIN CONDITION - SOFT
- 4. TERRAIN CONDITION - BERM

Factual Information

On March 14, 1996, at 1100 hours Pacific standard time, a Burkhart Grob Flugzeugbau, G102 Club Astir IIIB, N851BG, collided with a berm while making an off-airport landing during a personal flight from the Douglas County Airport, Minden, Nevada. The glider was substantially damaged, and the airline transport pilot was not injured. Visual meteorological conditions existed. The flight originated from Minden at 1020.

The pilot reported that he received a weather briefing which indicated the possibility of ridge lift. Following what he described as a normal takeoff and climb, the pilot released from the tow plane when he was at 7,000 feet mean sea level (msl), about 4 miles from the 4,718 foot msl airport, and 2 miles from the ridge.

The pilot further reported that he encountered some ridge lift, but descended to 6,200 feet msl. Then, a fairly substantial sink rate was experienced and he realized that he was not high enough to return to the airport. The pilot made a forced landing in a soft, muddy dirt field, about 0.25 miles from the airport.

Pilot Information

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|----------------------------------|---|--|-----------------|
| Certificate: | Airline transport; Flight instructor | Age: | 37, Male |
| Airplane Rating(s): | Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land | Seat Occupied: | Front |
| Other Aircraft Rating(s): | Glider | Restraint Used: | |
| Instrument Rating(s): | Airplane | Second Pilot Present: | No |
| Instructor Rating(s): | Airplane multi-engine; Airplane single-engine; Glider; Instrument airplane | Toxicology Performed: | No |
| Medical Certification: | Class 2 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim | Last FAA Medical Exam: | August 17, 1995 |
| Occupational Pilot: | UNK | Last Flight Review or Equivalent: | |
| Flight Time: | 4375 hours (Total, all aircraft), 6 hours (Total, this make and model), 2450 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 6 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft) | | |

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

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|--------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------|---------|
| Aircraft Make: | Burkhart Grob | Registration: | N851BG |
| Model/Series: | G102 G102 | Aircraft Category: | Glider |
| Year of Manufacture: | | Amateur Built: | |
| Airworthiness Certificate: | Normal | Serial Number: | 5639CB |
| Landing Gear Type: | Tailwheel | Seats: | 1 |
| Date/Type of Last Inspection: | July 1, 1995 Annual | Certified Max Gross Wt.: | 700 lbs |
| Time Since Last Inspection: | | Engines: | Unknown |
| Airframe Total Time: | | Engine Manufacturer: | |
| ELT: | Not installed | Engine Model/Series: | |
| Registered Owner: | SOAR MINDEN | Rated Power: | |
| Operator: | | 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: | Visual (VMC) | Condition of Light: | Day |
| Observation Facility, Elevation: | | Distance from Accident Site: | |
| Observation Time: | | Direction from Accident Site: | |
| Lowest Cloud Condition: | Scattered / 5000 ft AGL | Visibility | 7 miles |
| Lowest Ceiling: | None | Visibility (RVR): | |
| Wind Speed/Gusts: | 14 knots / | Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Wind Direction: | 60° | Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Altimeter Setting: | | Temperature/Dew Point: | |
| Precipitation and Obscuration: | No Obscuration; No Precipitation | | |
| Departure Point: | (MEV) | Type of Flight Plan Filed: | None |
| Destination: | | Type of Clearance: | None |
| Departure Time: | 10:20 Local | Type of Airspace: | Class G |

Airport Information

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|-----------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|
| Airport: | DOUGLAS COUNTY MEV | Runway Surface Type: | |
| Airport Elevation: | 4718 ft msl | Runway Surface Condition: | |
| Runway Used: | 0 | IFR Approach: | None |
| Runway Length/Width: | | VFR Approach/Landing: | Forced landing |

Wreckage and Impact Information

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|----------------------------|--------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 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: | 39.01073,-119.749778(est) |

Administrative Information

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| Investigator In Charge (IIC): | Pollack, Wayne |
| Additional Participating Persons: | JAMES WOOD; RENO , NV |
| Original Publish Date: | September 19, 1996 |
| Last Revision Date: | |
| Investigation Class: | Class |
| Note: | |
| Investigation Docket: | https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=29390 |

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](#).