



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	ANCHORAGE, Alaska	<b>Incident Number:</b>	ANC971A089
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	June 24, 1997, 09:00 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N4952E
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Cessna 185	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Minor
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	2 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation		

## Analysis

The airline transport pilot was taking a check ride with an FAA inspector for a reinstatement of his flight instructor certificate. The check ride was being conducted in the pilot's amphibian float equipped airplane. Under the direction of the FAA inspector, the pilot was demonstrating the technique for a glassy water landing. Shortly after touchdown, the airplane slowly nosed over. Both the pilot and the inspector were uninjured, and were able to quickly evacuate the airplane. The pilot related he was given different departure instructions from the air traffic control tower when he took off from a hard surface runway at the beginning of the flight, and he elected to leave his wheels extended longer than normal because of the route of flight. He said he forgot to retract them prior to the water landing. The FAA inspector indicated he also was unaware of the extended wheels. The landing gear indicator light in the airplane was functional at the time of the incident.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this incident to be: The pilot-in-command's failure to retract the landing gear which led to an inadvertent water landing with the amphibian float wheels extended. Associated factors are the pilot's habit interference and the FAA inspector's inadequate monitoring of the flight.

### Findings

Occurrence #1: WHEELS DOWN LANDING IN WATER  
Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

1. (C) GEAR RETRACTION - NOT PERFORMED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) HABIT INTERFERENCE - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. WHEELS DOWN LANDING IN WATER - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (F) MONITORING - INADEQUATE - FAA(PRINCIPAL OPERATIONS INSPECTOR)

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Occurrence #2: NOSE OVER

Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

5. TERRAIN CONDITION - WATER

## Factual Information

On June 24, 1997, about 0915 Alaska daylight time, an amphibian float equipped Cessna 185 airplane, N4952E, received minor damage while landing on Figure Eight Lake, located about 15 miles northwest of Anchorage, Alaska. The airline transport certificated pilot-in-command (PIC), and the airline transport certificated Federal Aviation Administration inspector aboard the airplane were not injured. The local, 14 CFR Part 91 flight operated in visual meteorological conditions without a flight plan. The flight departed the Anchorage International Airport about 0845. The purpose of the flight was for the PIC to receive a Certificated Flight Instructor (CFI) renewal flight check from the FAA inspector.

The NTSB investigator-in-charge spoke with the FAA inspector via telephone on June 24, and the pilot on June 25. Both the PIC and the FAA inspector related essentially the same information. The flight departed with the amphibian float wheels extended from Runway 24, intersection Charlie. The PIC accepted a clearance to turn to the right (north) prior to reaching Runway 14/32. The PIC said this clearance was acceptable, but instead of immediately retracting his wheels once he was airborne, he elected to keep the wheels extended longer than normal because the route of flight would place the airplane over a hard surface for a longer than normal period of time. The PIC said he was also concerned and distracted with radio transmissions and other airplane traffic as he departed Anchorage and neared Figure Eight Lake. The PIC said he forgot to retract the landing gear, and believes the distractions associated with the departure from Anchorage interrupted his normal routine of retracting the wheels. At the FAA inspector's request, he made an approach to land on Figure Eight Lake, and began to demonstrate and verbalize to the FAA inspector the technique for a glassy water landing. Upon touchdown, the airplane slowed, tipped forward, and went upside down.

The FAA inspector related that he was also distracted looking for airplane traffic, and failed to notice that the PIC had not retracted the wheels.

Both occupants were able to exit the airplane, and sat on the floats for a short time until another airplane landed on the lake and picked them up.

The airplane is equipped with landing gear position indicator lamps which reflect whether the wheels are retracted or extended. The PIC indicated these lamps were operating properly throughout the flight and landing.

The airplane was recovered and examined by an NTSB investigator. No preimpact mechanical anomalies were discovered, and the degree of damage was reclassified as minor.

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Airline transport	<b>Age:</b>	51, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	Helicopter	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	Yes
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 2 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	April 15, 1996
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	UNK	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	11900 hours (Total, all aircraft), 4500 hours (Total, this make and model), 6878 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 80 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 50 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Cessna	<b>Registration:</b>	N4952E
<b>Model/Series:</b>	185 185	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	18503918
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Amphibian; Float	<b>Seats:</b>	4
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	June 15, 1996 Annual	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	3350 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	31 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	1596 Hrs	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Continental
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed, not activated	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	IO-520-D
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	JOHN S. LEE	<b>Rated Power:</b>	300 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>	ANC ,144 ft msl	<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	15 Nautical Miles
<b>Observation Time:</b>	08:53 Local	<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	215°
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Scattered / 5000 ft AGL	<b>Visibility</b>	30 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	Broken / 20000 ft AGL	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	8 knots /	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	310°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	30 inches Hg	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	14°C / 9°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	(ANC )	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>		<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	08:45 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class G

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>		<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>		<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	
<b>Runway Used:</b>	0	<b>IFR Approach:</b>	None
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>		<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	Valley/terrain following

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	2 None	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Minor
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>		<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>	61.160339,-149.990081(est)

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Labelle, James
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	VERENE L MILLER (FAA); ANCHORAGE , AK
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	November 10, 1998
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class</a>
<b>Note:</b>	
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=2947">https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=2947</a>

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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](#).