



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	AUBURN, California	Accident Number:	LAX96LA324
Date & Time:	August 29, 1996, 16:30 Local	Registration:	N9315E
Aircraft:	Cessna 172N	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

According to the pilot, at the conclusion of his 2.5-hour-long flight he entered the traffic pattern and observed that the airplane was slightly high. On final approach, he believed that the airplane was slightly low, so he reduced the landing flaps to the 10-degree setting. He then realized that he had misjudged his altitude and was, in fact, high. The pilot further reported that he misjudged the airplane's rate of descent, which he characterized as excessive, and the airplane touched down hard on the runway. Thereafter, the airplane bounced, recontacted the runway, bounced again, and came to rest with a collapsed nose gear strut and bent firewall. The pilot had received a biennial flight review the morning of the accident flight. Prior to the BFR, he had not flown an airplane in 2 years.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the pilot's misjudged landing flare and improper bounced landing recovery. A contributing factor was his lack of recent flying experience.

Findings

Occurrence #1: HARD LANDING
Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings
1. PROPER DESCENT RATE - NOT ATTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

2. (F) LACK OF RECENT EXPERIENCE - PILOT IN COMMAND

3. (C) FLARE - MISJUDGED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: NOSE GEAR COLLAPSED

Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

4. LANDING GEAR, NOSE GEAR - OVERLOAD

Factual Information

On August 29, 1996, at 1630 hours Pacific daylight time, a Cessna 172N, N9315E, experienced a hard landing at the Auburn Municipal Airport, Auburn, California. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time, and a visual flight rules flight plan was filed. The airplane was substantially damaged, and neither the private pilot nor the passenger was injured. The flight originated from Lompoc, California, at 1400.

According to the pilot, he made a traffic pattern approach to the airport and was slightly high on the downwind leg. On final approach, he believed that the airplane was slightly low, so he reduced the landing flaps to the 10-degree setting. He then realized that he had misjudged his altitude and was, in fact, high.

The pilot further reported that he misjudged the airplane's rate of descent and attempted a short field landing. He attempted to flare, but the airplane continued its "excessive rate of descent" and it contacted the runway, bounced, recontacted the runway, bounced, and came to rest with a collapsed nose gear strut and bent firewall.

Regarding the pilot's currency, he received a biennial flight review the morning of the accident flight. Prior to the BFR, he had not flown an airplane in 2 years.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	65, 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--w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	August 28, 1996
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	160 hours (Total, all aircraft), 100 hours (Total, this make and model), 100 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N9315E
Model/Series:	172N 172N	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	17272221
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	July 11, 1996 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2300 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	6056 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-320-H2AD
Registered Owner:	WILLIAM D. TRESKY	Rated Power:	160 Horsepower
Operator:	GENE E. SCHLIMMER	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:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/ None	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	0°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	39°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	LOMPOC (LPC)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	(AUN)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	14:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class E

Airport Information

Airport:	AUBURN MUNICIPAL AUN	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	1531 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	25	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	3100 ft / 60 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Full stop;Traffic pattern

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 None	Latitude, Longitude:	38.920055,-121.069808(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Pollack, Wayne

Additional Participating Persons: EARL R BENEDICT; SACRAMENTO , CA

Original Publish Date: September 5, 1997

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=29551>

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](#).