



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	WESTPORT, New York	Accident Number:	NYC87LA212
Date & Time:	July 31, 1987, 19:30 Local	Registration:	N14037
Aircraft:	LAKE LA-4-250	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Serious, 2 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

DRG THE TAKEOFF RUN ON A LAKE, THE AMPHIBIAN ENCTR D ROUGH WATER & BECAME AIRBORNE PREMATURELY. THE ACFT THEN SETTLED ONTO THE WATER IN A SLIGHTLY NOSE HIGH ATTITUDE & TOUCHED DOWN IN FRONT OF A LARGE WAVE. THE ACFT'S NOSE CRASHED HEAD-ON INTO THE WAVE WHICH ALMOST BROUGHT THE PLANE TO A COMPLETE STOP. WITHIN SECONDS, THE NOSE SANK & THE ACFT BECAME INVERTED. THE OCCUPANTS EXITED THRU A WINDOW THAT HAD COME OUT DRG IMPACT. THE ACFT CONTD TO FLOAT, ALTHOUGH THE CABIN AREA WAS COMPLETELY SUBMERGED.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT

Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF

Findings

1. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - WATER,ROUGH
2. (C) UNSUITABLE TERRAIN OR TAKEOFF/LANDING/TAXI AREA - SELECTED - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) LIFT-OFF - PREMATURE
4. (C) STALL/MUSH - INADVERTENT

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF

Findings

5. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - WATER,ROUGH

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	46, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea	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:	June 1, 1987
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	381 hours (Total, all aircraft), 98 hours (Total, this make and model), 297 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 28 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	LAKE	Registration:	N14037
Model/Series:	LA-4-250 LA-4-250	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	39
Landing Gear Type:	Amphibian	Seats:	5
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	August 29, 1986 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2400 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	107 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	IO-540-C4B5
Registered Owner:	THOMAS G. TUXILL	Rated Power:	250 Horsepower
Operator:		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	20 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	10 knots / 15 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	360°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	24°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	19:30 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	LAKE CHAMPLAIN	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	2 Minor	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Serious, 2 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	44.170898,-73.430549(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Marcantelli, Vincent

Additional Participating Persons:

Original Publish Date: March 31, 1989

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=30702>

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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](#).