



Aviation Investigation Final Report

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| Location: | SOLDOTNA, Alaska | Accident Number: | ANC98LA087 |
| Date & Time: | June 30, 1998, 16:15 Local | Registration: | N2163A |
| Aircraft: | Piper PA-20 | Aircraft Damage: | Substantial |
| Defining Event: | | Injuries: | 2 Minor |
| Flight Conducted Under: | Part 91: General aviation - Personal | | |

Analysis

The certificated private pilot was practicing touch-and-go landings with a friend. During a telephone conversation with the NTSB investigator-in-charge one day after the accident, the pilot stated that he thought the winds were fairly calm as he approached runway 25. He said that while on final approach the wind increased to an estimated 10 to 15 knots from the west, and a strong downdraft pushed the airplane into trees. In his written statement dated July 27, 1998, the pilot reported that while practicing touch-and-go landings, he stalled the airplane prematurely. The airplane collided with an area of high vegetation, and came to rest about 30 feet from the end of the runway. The airplane's fuselage, and wing lift struts sustained substantial damage. The pilot indicated there were no preimpact mechanical problems with the airplane. The Soldotna Airport wind conditions at the time of the accident were reported to be 237 degrees (magnetic) at 7 knots.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's inadvertent stall of the airplane.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - FINAL APPROACH

Findings

1. (C) STALL - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - FINAL APPROACH

Findings

2. TERRAIN CONDITION - HIGH VEGETATION

Factual Information

On June 30, 1998, about 1615 Alaska daylight time, a wheel equipped Piper PA-20 airplane, N2163A, sustained substantial damage while landing at the Soldotna Airport, Soldotna, Alaska. The private pilot/owner, and the one passenger aboard received minor injuries. The 14 CFR Part 91, personal flight departed the Soldotna Airport about 1430, and remained within the local traffic pattern. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and no flight plan was filed.

During a telephone conversation with the NTSB investigator-in-charge on July 1, the pilot related that he and a friend were practicing touch-and-go landings. He said he thought the winds were fairly calm as he approached runway 25. While on final approach, he said the wind increased to an estimated 10 to 15 knots from the west, and a strong downdraft pushed the airplane into an area of high brush.

In his written statement dated July 27, 1998, the pilot reported that while practicing touch-and-go landings, and while the airplane was on final approach to runway 25, he stalled the airplane prematurely. The pilot indicated there were no preimpact mechanical problems with the airplane.

The airplane collided with an area of high vegetation, and ultimately came to rest about 30 feet from the end of the runway. The airplane's wing lift struts, and fuselage sustained substantial damage.

The Soldotna Airport wind conditions at the time of the accident were reported to be 237 degrees (magnetic) at 7 knots.

Pilot Information

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| Certificate: | Private | Age: | 48, 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--no waivers/lim. | Last FAA Medical Exam: | May 28, 1997 |
| Occupational Pilot: | UNK | Last Flight Review or Equivalent: | |
| Flight Time: | 735 hours (Total, all aircraft), 643 hours (Total, this make and model), 680 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 9 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 9 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft) | | |

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

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|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Aircraft Make: | Piper | Registration: | N2163A |
| Model/Series: | PA-20 PA-20 | Aircraft Category: | Airplane |
| Year of Manufacture: | | Amateur Built: | |
| Airworthiness Certificate: | Normal | Serial Number: | 20-891 |
| Landing Gear Type: | Tailwheel | Seats: | 4 |
| Date/Type of Last Inspection: | June 14, 1997 Annual | Certified Max Gross Wt.: | 1800 lbs |
| Time Since Last Inspection: | 59 Hrs | Engines: | 1 Reciprocating |
| Airframe Total Time: | 5436 Hrs | Engine Manufacturer: | Lycoming |
| ELT: | Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident | Engine Model/Series: | O-320-C1A |
| Registered Owner: | RICHARD FRANK MOORE | Rated Power: | 150 Horsepower |
| 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: | PAS ,108 ft msl | Distance from Accident Site: | |
| Observation Time: | 14:56 Local | Direction from Accident Site: | |
| Lowest Cloud Condition: | Scattered / 5000 ft AGL | Visibility | 10 miles |
| Lowest Ceiling: | None | Visibility (RVR): | |
| Wind Speed/Gusts: | 7 knots / | Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Wind Direction: | 237° | Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Altimeter Setting: | 30 inches Hg | Temperature/Dew Point: | 21°C |
| Precipitation and Obscuration: | No Obscuration; No Precipitation | | |
| Departure Point: | | Type of Flight Plan Filed: | None |
| Destination: | | Type of Clearance: | None |
| Departure Time: | 14:30 Local | Type of Airspace: | |

Airport Information

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|-----------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|
| Airport: | SOLDOTNA SXQ | Runway Surface Type: | Asphalt |
| Airport Elevation: | 108 ft msl | Runway Surface Condition: | Dry |
| Runway Used: | 25 | IFR Approach: | None |
| Runway Length/Width: | 5000 ft / 130 ft | VFR Approach/Landing: | Touch and go |

Wreckage and Impact Information

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|----------------------------|---------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Crew Injuries: | 1 Minor | Aircraft Damage: | Substantial |
| Passenger Injuries: | 1 Minor | Aircraft Fire: | None |
| Ground Injuries: | N/A | Aircraft Explosion: | None |
| Total Injuries: | 2 Minor | Latitude, Longitude: | 60.320667,-150.78984(est) |

Administrative Information

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| Investigator In Charge (IIC): | Johnson, Clinton |
| Additional Participating Persons: | JAY E BURTON (FAA); ANCHORAGE , AK |
| Original Publish Date: | May 19, 1999 |
| Last Revision Date: | |
| Investigation Class: | Class |
| Note: | |
| Investigation Docket: | https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=3170 |

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](#).