



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	LA BELLE, Florida	Accident Number:	MIA89LA006
Date & Time:	October 6, 1988, 18:00 Local	Registration:	N6815Y
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-23-250	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Ferry		

Analysis

THE PILOT WHILE ON A FERRY PERMIT FLIGHT EXPERIENCED A FAILURE OF THE #4 CYL OF THE LEFT ENGINE AND DID NOT ATTAIN THE VYSE SPEED AND THE AIRCRAFT STARTED TO DESCEND. THE PILOT DITCHED THE AIRCRAFT IN A LAKE AND IT WAS NOT RECOVERED. NO RECORDS ON THE ENGINES OR AIRFRAME WERE AVAILABLE. THE FAILURE OF THE ENG HAD OPENED THE COWLING ON THE DEAD ENG WHICH ADDED CONSIDERABLE DRAG TO THE AIRFRAME, REDUCING THE AIRSPEED.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(TOTAL) - MECH FAILURE/MALF
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings

1. 1 ENGINE
 2. (C) ENGINE ASSEMBLY,CYLINDER - FAILURE,TOTAL
 3. (F) MAINTENANCE,INSPECTION - INADEQUATE - OTHER MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL
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Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - EMERGENCY

Occurrence #3: DITCHING

Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

4. TERRAIN CONDITION - WATER

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Flight instructor	Age:	37, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane single-engine	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	July 12, 1988
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	6800 hours (Total, all aircraft), 45 hours (Total, this make and model), 6575 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 400 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 100 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 6 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N6815Y
Model/Series:	PA-23-250 PA-23-250	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal; Special flight (Special)	Serial Number:	27-4154
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	October 5, 1988 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	5200 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	6 Hrs	Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	IO-540-A
Registered Owner:	SOUTHER FIELD AVIATION	Rated Power:	250 Horsepower
Operator:	SOUTHER FIELD AVIATION	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	15 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	10 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	135°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	21°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	KEY WEST , FL (FYW)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	AMERICUS , GA (ACJ)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	16:30 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:		Runway Surface Type:	Water
Airport Elevation:	0 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Wet
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	0 ft / 0 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Forced landing;Straight-in

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	26.639596,-81.340347(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Alston, Andrew

Additional Participating Persons: DAN HUTCHINGS; MIAMI , FL

Original Publish Date: November 7, 1989

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=32342>

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](#).