



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	WEBSTER, New Hampshire	Accident Number:	NYC92LA010
Date & Time:	October 19, 1991, 09:15 Local	Registration:	N4051L
Aircraft:	BALLOON WORKS FIREFLY 7	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Fatal, 2 Minor, 2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

WITH LOW FUEL, THE PLT MADE A PRECAUTIONARY LND IN A CONFINED AREA, NEXT TO A 34,500 VOLT PWR LINE. THE PLT SAID A GND CREWMAN GRABBED THE BASKET PRIOR TO TOUCHDOWN, AND SHE WAS NOT AWARE OF HIS PRESENCE. THE DEFLATING BALLOON ENVELOPE CONTACTED THE PWR LINE AND CURRENT FLOWED DOWN THE TEMPERATURE SENSING LINE BETWEEN THE TOP OF THE ENVELOPE AND THE BASKET. THE GND CREWMAN WAS FATALLY ELECTROCUTED AND HIS 12 YEAR OLD SON RECEIVED MINOR INJURIES. THE GND CREWMAN WAS FROM ANOTHER BALLOON CREW WHICH HAD ALREADY LANDED; HE WAS NOT IN RADIO CONTACT WITH THE PLT OF N4051L

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: FAILURE OF THE GROUND CREWMAN (FROM ANOTHER BALLOON) TO RECOGNIZE THE HAZARDOUS CONDITION THAT EXISTED, WHEN THE BALLOON CAME IN CONTACT WITH A HIGH VOLTAGE POWER LINE DURING A PRECAUTIONARY LANDING. FACTORS RELATED TO THE ACCIDENT WERE: THE LACK OF SUITABLE TERRAIN FOR THE PRECAUTIONARY LANDING, THE PROXIMITY OF THE POWER LINE, FAILURE OF THE BALLOON PILOT TO REMAIN CLEAR OF THE POWER LINE, AND THE GROUND CREWMAN'S FAILURE TO PROPERLY COMMUNICATE WITH THE BALLOON PILOT.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

1. PRECAUTIONARY LANDING - INITIATED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - NONE SUITABLE
3. (F) OBJECT - WIRE, TRANSMISSION
4. (F) CLEARANCE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
5. (F) COMMUNICATIONS - INADEQUATE - GROUND PERSONNEL
6. (C) UNSAFE/HAZARDOUS CONDITION - NOT IDENTIFIED - GROUND PERSONNEL

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	41,Female
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Balloon	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	None None	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	93 hours (Total, all aircraft), 93 hours (Total, this make and model), 75 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 10 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	BALLOON WORKS	Registration:	N4051L
Model/Series:	FIREFLY 7 FIREFLY 7	Aircraft Category:	Balloon
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	7946
Landing Gear Type:		Seats:	
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	June 4, 1991 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1650 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	14 Hrs	Engines:	0 Unknown
Airframe Total Time:	445 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	EDWARD LAPIES	Rated Power:	
Operator:	MARY ANN LAPIES	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:	CON ,346 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	10 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	09:50 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	120°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	15 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	4 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	40°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	12°C / 9°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	07:45 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

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

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 Minor, 1 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	1 Fatal, 1 Minor	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal, 2 Minor, 2 None	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Hancock, Robert
Additional Participating Persons:	JOHN WOOD; PORTLAND , ME
Original Publish Date:	May 28, 1993
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=37091

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