



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	BURNSVILLE, North Carolina	<b>Accident Number:</b>	MIA97LA218
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	July 27, 1997, 14:30 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N9396P
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Piper PA-24-260	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	2 Minor, 2 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

## Analysis

Before takeoff the pilot failed to verify that the main cabin door was closed and latched. After takeoff the door opened and he maneuvered the airplane to land in the opposite direction than for takeoff. He stated that he became distracted due to the perceived emergency and landed about 6 feet short of the runway on upsloping terrain. The left main landing gear then separated from the airplane which bounced onto then off the runway into a 25-foot deep ravine where the airplane came to rest upright.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The failure of the pilot to use the checklist to confirm that the main cabin door was closed and locked before takeoff. Also, failure of the pilot to attain the proper touchdown point during the precautionary landing. Contributing to the accident was the self induced pressure by the pilot.

## Findings

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

### Findings

1. (C) CHECKLIST - NOT FOLLOWED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. DOOR - OPEN

3. (C) PROPER TOUCHDOWN POINT - NOT ATTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (F) SELF-INDUCED PRESSURE - PILOT IN COMMAND

## Factual Information

On July 27, 1997, about 1430 eastern daylight time, a Piper PA-24-260, N9396P, coregistered to private individuals, landed short during a precautionary landing shortly after takeoff from the Mountain Air Airport, a private airstrip near Burnsville, North Carolina. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time and no flight plan was filed for the 14 CFR Part 91 personal flight. The airplane was substantially damaged and the commercial-rated pilot and two passengers were not injured. The right front seat passenger sustained minor injuries. The flight originated about 2 minutes earlier.

The pilot stated that before takeoff he failed to check that the main cabin door was closed and latched. Shortly after takeoff his wife in the right front seat noted that the cabin door was ajar. He maneuvered the airplane to return for landing on the opposite direction used for departure. He stated that he became distracted by the perceived emergency and landed about 6 feet short on upsloping terrain. The left main landing gear separated and the airplane bounced onto the runway, veered off the left side of the runway into a 25-foot deep ravine and came to rest upright.

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	47, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	Glider	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 3 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	January 15, 1997
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	No	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	1190 hours (Total, all aircraft), 125 hours (Total, this make and model), 1025 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 29 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 22 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Piper	<b>Registration:</b>	N9396P
<b>Model/Series:</b>	PA-24-260 PA-24-260	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	24-4899
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Retractable - Tricycle	<b>Seats:</b>	4
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	February 10, 1997 Annual	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	3200 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	33 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	3187 Hrs	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Lycoming
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	IO-540-N1A5
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	KRISTAN R. MAYNARD	<b>Rated Power:</b>	260 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>		<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None
<b>Operator Does Business As:</b>		<b>Operator Designator Code:</b>	

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual (VMC)	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	AVL ,2165 ft msl	<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	27 Nautical Miles
<b>Observation Time:</b>	14:54 Local	<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	205°
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Clear	<b>Visibility</b>	6 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	7 knots /	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	10°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	30 inches Hg	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	28°C / 23°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	N/A - None - Haze		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	(2NC0)	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>	INDIANAPOLIS , IN (UMP)	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	14:28 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class G

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>	MOUNTAIN AIR AIRPORT 2NC0	<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	Asphalt
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>	4432 ft msl	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	Dry
<b>Runway Used:</b>	32	<b>IFR Approach:</b>	
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>	2900 ft / 50 ft	<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	Full stop;Precautionary landing

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	2 Minor, 1 None	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	2 Minor, 2 None	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	35.909988,-82.290367(est)

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Monville, Timothy
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	WILLIAM D SEXTON; CHARLOTTE , NC
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	February 2, 1998
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class</a>
<b>Note:</b>	
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=38316">https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=38316</a>

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