



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	PALATKA, Florida	<b>Accident Number:</b>	MIA98LA034
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	November 18, 1997, 10:42 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N68327
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Cessna 152	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Minor
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Instructional		

## Analysis

The student pilot had trouble screwing closed the oilcap/dipstick during his preflight walk-around inspection, and returned to the flight school for help. He did not wait for the help he sought, and instead, returned to the airplane and departed on the first leg of his solo cross-country. On the return leg, he experienced an engine failure that forced his crash landing into a swamp area. Examination of the wreckage revealed almost total loss of engine oil out the oil breather and resultant engine seizure.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the student pilot's failure to properly secure the oilcap/dipstick within it's integral oil filler tube during his preflight inspection.

## Findings

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

### Findings

1. (C) LUBRICATING SYSTEM,OIL FILLER CAP - NOT SECURED
2. (C) AIRCRAFT PREFLIGHT - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) FLUID,OIL - EXHAUSTION

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Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING

Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING

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Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING

Findings

4. TERRAIN CONDITION - SWAMPY

## Factual Information

On November 18, 1997, about 1042 eastern standard time, a Cessna 152, N68327, registered to Air Lease, Inc., operating as a 14 CFR 91 instructional flight, crashed about 4 miles west of Palatka, Florida. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time, and a VFR flight plan had been filed. The aircraft was substantially damaged, and the student pilot sustained minor injuries. The flight originated from Gainesville, Florida, about 30 minutes before the accident.

The student pilot stated he was returning from his solo cross-country flight and during cruise, at an altitude of 2,500 feet, engine rpm decayed from 2,500 to 2,000. He applied full throttle, but the rpm decayed further to 1,500 momentarily, and then the engine quit. He initiated a forced landing in a swamp area, and the aircraft came to rest in an upright and tail high attitude, minus the nose gear that had been sheared.

According to the FAA inspector's report, engine oil covered the fuselage left side and belly, as well as the horizontal stabilizer. The oil service access door had popped open and the cap/dipstick assembly was found about 3 feet forward of the aircraft. The threads to the cap/dipstick were not damaged. The engine oil sump was found empty.

The chief flight instructor for Philair stated the pilot was given instruction previously for a problem with dipstick securing, and on the accident day had a repeat problem during his aircraft preflight. He did return to the flight school for additional advice, but for some reason departed without it.

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Student	<b>Age:</b>	18, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None	<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--no waivers/lim.	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	March 25, 1997
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	No	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	30 hours (Total, all aircraft), 30 hours (Total, this make and model), 9 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Cessna	<b>Registration:</b>	N68327
<b>Model/Series:</b>	152 152	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Utility	<b>Serial Number:</b>	15282259
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Tricycle	<b>Seats:</b>	2
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	November 7, 1997 100 hour	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	1670 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	43 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	8440 Hrs	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Lycoming
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	O-235-L2C
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	AIR LEASE, INC	<b>Rated Power:</b>	110 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>	PHILAIR FLIGHT CENTER	<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>	GNV ,152 ft msl	<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	33 Nautical Miles
<b>Observation Time:</b>	10:54 Local	<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	280°
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Scattered / 25000 ft AGL	<b>Visibility</b>	7 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	7 knots / None	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	80°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	30 inches Hg	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	23°C / 10°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	GAINESVILLE (GNV)	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	VFR
<b>Destination:</b>	DAYTONA BEACH (DAB)	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	VFR
<b>Departure Time:</b>	10:12 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class E

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>		<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>		<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	
<b>Runway Used:</b>	0	<b>IFR Approach:</b>	
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>		<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 Minor	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>		<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	1 Minor	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	29.639659,-81.649475(est)

## Administrative Information

**Investigator In Charge (IIC):** Stone, Alan

**Additional Participating Persons:** ALAN C NEMCIK; ORLANDO , FL

**Original Publish Date:** November 6, 1998

**Last Revision Date:**

**Investigation Class:** [Class](#)

**Note:**

**Investigation Docket:** <https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=38435>

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