



AVIATION



HIGHWAY



MARINE



RAILROAD



PIPELINE

Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	BELLINGHAM, Washington	Accident Number:	SEA91FA061
Date & Time:	March 5, 1991, 19:31 Local	Registration:	CGJNM
Aircraft:	Cessna 172M	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	3 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE ACFT WAS 1 OF 5 THAT WERE ON A RETURN TRIP FROM LOS ANGELES, CA, TO ABBOTSFORD, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA. THE FLT CREWS HAD OBTAINED WX INFO DURING STOPS AT CRESENT CITY, CA, & NEWPORT, OR. AFTER LNDG AT EVERETT, WA, ONE OF THE FLT CREWS FILED A FLT PLAN FOR ALL 5 ACFT. AT THAT TIME, HE WAS ASKED IF HE WANTED A WX BRIEFING, BUT HE INDCD THEY HAD ALREADY RCVD A BRIEF FOR THE ROUTE. RPRTDLY, THE PLTS ALSO OBTAINED WX INFO FROM A COMPUTER IN THE LOBBY OF AN FBO AT EVERETT. AFTER DEPG EVERETT ON A NGT FLT TO ABBOTSFORD, THE FLTS ENCTR DETERIORATING WX WITH SNOW & CLOUDS. THE FLT CREWS OF 2 ACFT REVERSED COURSE & LNDD AT AN ALTERNATE ARPT. THE CREW OF A 3RD ACFT DIVERTED, WENT OVER WATER, THEN CONTD EN ROUTE. HOWEVER, THE 2 REMAINING ACFT (C-GJNM & C-GIXI) COLLIDED WITH MOUNTAINOUS TRRN ABT 3 MI APART. C-GJNM IMPACTED ON WOODED TRRN AT AN ELEV OF ABT 2100'. ABT 11 MI NW AT BELLINGHAM, WA (ELEV 158'), THE 1950 WX WAS IN PART: 2100' BKN, 10 MI VIS WITH RAIN, WIND FM 240 DEG AT 6 KTS. THE WRECKAGE WAS FND THE NEXT DAY CVRD WITH SNOW.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: VFR FLIGHT BY THE PILOT INTO INSTRUMENT METEOROLOGICAL CONDITIONS (IMC), AND HIS FAILURE TO MAINTAIN PROPER ALTITUDE AND/OR CLEARANCE FROM THE MOUNTAINOUS TERRAIN. FACTORS RELATED TO THE ACCIDENT WERE: DARKNESS AND THE ADVERSE WEATHER AND TERRAIN CONDITIONS.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER

Phase of Operation: CRUISE - NORMAL

Findings

1. (F) LIGHT CONDITION - DARK NIGHT
 2. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - HIGH TERRAIN
 3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - CLOUDS
 4. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - LOW CEILING
 5. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - FOG
 6. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - SNOW
 7. (C) VFR FLIGHT INTO IMC - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND
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Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings

8. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - MOUNTAINOUS/HILLY
9. (C) PROPER ALTITUDE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Flight instructor	Age:	24, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land; Multi-engine sea	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):		Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	June 15, 1990
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	1214 hours (Total, all aircraft), 896 hours (Total, this make and model), 993 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 49 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 28 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	CGJNM
Model/Series:	172M 172M	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:		Serial Number:	17273478
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2300 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	0 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-320-D2AJ
Registered Owner:		Rated Power:	160 Horsepower
Operator:	TRINITY WESTERN UNIVERSITY	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument (IMC)	Condition of Light:	Night/dark
Observation Facility, Elevation:	BLI, 158 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	11 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	19:50 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	308°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown	Visibility	
Lowest Ceiling:	Unknown	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	6 knots / None	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	240°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	3°C / 1°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	N/A - None - Snow		
Departure Point:	EVERETT (PAE)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	VFR
Destination:	ABBOTSFORD, BC (CYXX)	Type of Clearance:	VFR
Departure Time:	19:08 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

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

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	2 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	48.730377,-122.479095(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Eckrote, Debra

Additional Participating Persons:

Original Publish Date: June 16, 1992

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=41307>

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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](#).