



Aviation Investigation Final Report

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| Location: | FARMINGTON, Utah | Accident Number: | SEA92LA173 |
| Date & Time: | August 4, 1992, 07:00 Local | Registration: | N7091C |
| Aircraft: | PIPER PA-32R-300 | Aircraft Damage: | Destroyed |
| Defining Event: | | Injuries: | 5 Minor |
| Flight Conducted Under: | Part 91: General aviation - Personal | | |

Analysis

THE PILOT OF THE PA-32R-300 ELECTED TO TURN INTO A BOX CANYON DURING HIS EN ROUTE CLIMB TO CRUISE. AT THE TIME HE TURNED INTO THE CANYON, THE PILOT FELT THAT THE RATE OF CLIMB WOULD ASSURE CLEARANCE OF THE RIDGE AT THE END OF THE CANYON. AFTER ENTERING THE CANYON THE AIRCRAFT ENCOUNTERED AN AREA OF DOWNDRAFTS. THE DESCENDING AIR REDUCED THE RATE OF CLIMB TO AN EXTENT THAT WOULD NOT ALLOW THE AIRCRAFT TO OUTCLIMB THE RISING TERRAIN. BY THIS TIME THE PILOT FELT THAT, BECAUSE OF THE NARROWNESS OF THE CANYON, HE COULD NOT SUCCESSFULLY REVERSE COURSE. HE THEREFORE ELECTED TO CONTINUE UP THE CANYON, WHERE HE EVENTUALLY FLEW THE AIRCRAFT THROUGH A CONTROLLED IMPACT WITH THE TERRAIN.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: THE PILOT'S POOR INFLIGHT DECISION. FACTORS INCLUDE DOWNDRAFTS AND A BOX CANYON.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: CLIMB - TO CRUISE

Findings

1. (C) IN-FLIGHT PLANNING/DECISION - POOR - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - BLIND/BOX CANYON
3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - DOWNDRAFT

Factual Information

Pilot Information

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|----------------------------------|---|--|--------------|
| Certificate: | Private | Age: | 36,Male |
| Airplane Rating(s): | Single-engine land | Seat Occupied: | Left |
| Other Aircraft Rating(s): | None | Restraint Used: | |
| Instrument Rating(s): | Airplane | Second Pilot Present: | No |
| Instructor Rating(s): | None | Toxicology Performed: | No |
| Medical Certification: | Class 3 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim. | Last FAA Medical Exam: | May 28, 1991 |
| Occupational Pilot: | UNK | Last Flight Review or Equivalent: | |
| Flight Time: | 499 hours (Total, all aircraft), 32 hours (Total, this make and model), 360 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 33 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 24 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft) | | |

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

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|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Aircraft Make: | PIPER | Registration: | N7091C |
| Model/Series: | PA-32R-300 PA-32R-300 | Aircraft Category: | Airplane |
| Year of Manufacture: | | Amateur Built: | |
| Airworthiness Certificate: | Normal | Serial Number: | 32R-7680033 |
| Landing Gear Type: | Retractable - Tricycle | Seats: | 6 |
| Date/Type of Last Inspection: | January 2, 2000 Unknown | Certified Max Gross Wt.: | 3600 lbs |
| Time Since Last Inspection: | | Engines: | 1 Reciprocating |
| Airframe Total Time: | | Engine Manufacturer: | LYCOMING |
| ELT: | Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident | Engine Model/Series: | IO-540-K1A5D |
| Registered Owner: | UNIVERSITY RESEARCH FOUND. | Rated Power: | 300 Horsepower |
| Operator: | UNIVERSITY RESEARCH FOUND. | Operating Certificate(s) Held: | None |
| Operator Does Business As: | | Operator Designator Code: | |

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

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|---|----------------------------------|---|-------------|
| 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 | 30 miles |
| Lowest Ceiling: | None | Visibility (RVR): | |
| Wind Speed/Gusts: | 4 knots / | Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Wind Direction: | 180° | Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Altimeter Setting: | 30 inches Hg | Temperature/Dew Point: | 22°C / 10°C |
| Precipitation and Obscuration: | No Obscuration; No Precipitation | | |
| Departure Point: | BOUNTIFUL (BTF) | Type of Flight Plan Filed: | IFR |
| Destination: | SIDNEY (SNY) | Type of Clearance: | None |
| Departure Time: | 06:45 Local | Type of Airspace: | Class G |

Airport Information

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

Wreckage and Impact Information

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|---------------------|---------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Crew Injuries: | 1 Minor | Aircraft Damage: | Destroyed |
| Passenger Injuries: | 4 Minor | Aircraft Fire: | On-ground |
| Ground Injuries: | N/A | Aircraft Explosion: | None |
| Total Injuries: | 5 Minor | Latitude, Longitude: | 40.979846,-111.899108(est) |

Administrative Information

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|-----------------------------------|---|
| Investigator In Charge (IIC): | Anderson, Orrin |
| Additional Participating Persons: | JIM RALPH; SALT LAKE CITY , UT |
| Original Publish Date: | August 31, 1993 |
| Last Revision Date: | |
| Investigation Class: | Class |
| Note: | |
| Investigation Docket: | https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=42870 |

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