



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	TALKEETNA, Alaska	<b>Accident Number:</b>	ANC98LA134
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	August 31, 1998, 17:50 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N333DG
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Cessna 185E	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	5 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 135: Air taxi & commuter - Non-scheduled - Sightseeing		

## Analysis

The 23 year old commercial pilot was landing a tailwheel equipped airplane on a gravel runway. The pilot stated that the touchdown and the landing roll were uneventful, until the airplane's nose veered slightly to the right. He said he compensated by applying left rudder, but the airplane suddenly ground looped to the right. The left wing and left elevator collided with the runway during the ground loop, and both sustained substantial damage. The pilot reported that during the ground loop, the left wheel casting separated. In the NTSB Pilot/Operator report, the Chief Pilot stated that the flight was returning to Talkeetna earlier than scheduled with a sick passenger aboard. He said that the pilot intended to land in the gravel area just short of the paved runway, eliminating the need to back taxi, and allowing the sick passenger to exit the airplane sooner. The operator reported that during touchdown, the pilot landed sideways, and the left wheel casting separated. Wind conditions at the time of the accident were reported to be calm.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to maintain directional control resulting in a inadvertent ground loop. A contributing factor was the induced pressure on the pilot by a sick passenger.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - ON GROUND/WATER  
Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

#### Findings

1. (C) DIRECTIONAL CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) PRESSURE INDUCED BY CONDITIONS/EVENTS - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. GROUND LOOP/SWERVE - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND

## Factual Information

On August 31, 1998, about 1750 Alaska daylight time, a wheel equipped Cessna 185E airplane, N333DG, sustained substantial damage while landing at the Talkeetna Airport, Talkeetna, Alaska. The airplane was being operated as a visual flight rules (VFR) local area flightseeing flight under Title 14, CFR Part 135, when the accident occurred. The certificated commercial pilot, and the four passengers aboard, were not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and a company flight plan was filed.

During a telephone conversation with the National Transportation Safety Board investigator-in-charge, on August 31, the pilot reported that he had just landed on runway 18. The pilot stated that the touchdown and the landing roll were uneventful, until the airplane's nose veered slightly to the right. He said he compensated by applying left rudder, but the airplane suddenly ground looped to the right. The left wing and left elevator collided with the runway during the ground loop, and both sustained substantial damage.

The pilot reported that during the ground loop, the left wheel casting separated, and was found about 20 feet behind the accident site.

In the NTSB Pilot/Operator report, the Chief Pilot reported that the flight was returning to Talkeetna earlier than scheduled due to a sick passenger aboard. He said that the pilot intended to land in the gravel area just short of the paved runway, eliminating the need to back taxi, and allow the sick passenger exit the airplane sooner. He reported that during touchdown, the pilot landed sideways, and the left wheel casting separated.

Wind conditions at the time of the accident were reported to be calm.

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	23, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<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 2 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	July 16, 1998
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	Yes	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	755 hours (Total, all aircraft), 200 hours (Total, this make and model), 500 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 170 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 91 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Cessna	<b>Registration:</b>	N333DG
<b>Model/Series:</b>	185E 185E	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	18503234
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Tailwheel	<b>Seats:</b>	6
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	July 18, 1998 100 hour	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	3600 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	88 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	5073 Hrs	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Continental
<b>ELT:</b>		<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	IO-520-D
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	DOUG GEETING AVIATION	<b>Rated Power:</b>	300 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>		<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	On-demand air taxi (135)
<b>Operator Does Business As:</b>		<b>Operator Designator Code:</b>	INYC

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual (VMC)	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	TKA ,358 ft msl	<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Observation Time:</b>	17:53 Local	<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Unknown	<b>Visibility</b>	10 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	Overcast / 1000 ft AGL	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	/	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	0°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	29 inches Hg	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	15°C / 8°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	(TKA )	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	Company VFR
<b>Destination:</b>	(TKA )	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	17:00 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class E

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>	TALKEETNA TKA	<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	Gravel
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>	358 ft msl	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	Dry
<b>Runway Used:</b>	18	<b>IFR Approach:</b>	None
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>	3500 ft / 75 ft	<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	Full stop

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	4 None	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	5 None	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	62.450687,-149.790267(est)

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Johnson, Clinton
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	BRIAN E HOHNER (FAA); ANCHORAGE , AK
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	March 30, 2000
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class</a>
<b>Note:</b>	
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=43876">https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=43876</a>

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant events in other modes of transportation—railroad, transit, highway, marine, pipeline, and commercial space. We determine the probable causes of the accidents and events we investigate, and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future occurrences. In addition, we conduct transportation safety research studies and offer information and other assistance to family members and survivors for each accident or event we investigate. We also serve as the appellate authority for enforcement actions involving aviation and mariner certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and US Coast Guard, and we adjudicate appeals of civil penalty actions taken by the FAA.

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](#).