



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	VENICE, Louisiana	Accident Number:	FTW99LA028
Date & Time:	August 12, 1998, 13:00 Local	Registration:	N4810
Aircraft:	Cessna 185F	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation		

Analysis

The pilot lost control of the amphibian airplane during a 'high speed step-taxi' after landing. The pilot noticed a swell left by a boat that had departed the landing area and elected to approach the swell at a 45 degree angle. As the airplane crossed the swell, the pilot felt the right float 'dig in.' In an effort to prevent the floats from sinking further, the pilot pulled full aft on the yoke and applied full power. The airplane nosed over inverted and began to sink.

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 control of the airplane during high speed step-taxi. A factor was the swell left by the boat.

Findings

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

Findings

1. (F) AIRPORT FACILITIES, RUNWAY/LANDING AREA CONDITION - LARGE WAVE/SWELL
2. (C) AIRCRAFT CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: NOSE OVER
Phase of Operation: TAXI - FROM LANDING

Factual Information

On August 12, 1998, approximately 1300 central daylight time, a Cessna 185F amphibian airplane, N4810, was substantially damaged following a loss of control during high speed taxi after landing at Brenton Sound near Venice, Louisiana. The commercial pilot and his passenger were not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and a company flight plan was filed for the Title 14 CFR Part 91 business flight which originated from Lacombe, Louisiana, at 1230. The airplane was owned and operated by Southern Natural Gas Company of Birmingham, Alabama.

According to a written statement provided by the pilot, he noticed a boat departing the landing area and determined that the boat would be clear prior to landing. After landing, the pilot started a "high speed step-taxi." The pilot noticed a swell left by the boat and decided to approach it at a 45 degree angle. As the airplane crossed the swell the pilot felt the right float "dig in." The pilot added full power and pulled full aft on the yoke in an effort to prevent the floats from going under water any farther. Subsequently, the aircraft nosed over inverted and began to sink.

The pilot reported that he opened his door, unbuckled his safety belt and exited the airplane. As he surfaced, he noticed that his passenger had not followed, so he elected to return to the airplane and assist his passenger.

At the time of the accident, the pilot had accumulated a total of 16,076 flight hours, of which 9,085 hours were in the same make and model as the accident aircraft.

FAA inspectors initially reported this occurrence in August and the damage was classified as minor. The aircraft was inspected again in November by a FAA inspector and the damage was re-classified as substantial. The FAA inspector stated that the engine mount was broken in half and the fire wall was buckled.

The NTSB South Central Region was notified of this occurrence on November 17, 1998.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	48, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	August 17, 1998
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	16076 hours (Total, all aircraft), 9085 hours (Total, this make and model), 15518 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 150 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 50 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N4810
Model/Series:	185F 185F	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	18504438
Landing Gear Type:	Amphibian	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	July 17, 1998 100 hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3350 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	37 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	5206 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	IO-550-D
Registered Owner:	SOUTHERN NATURAL GAS COMPANY	Rated Power:	300 Horsepower
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

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:	Scattered	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 12000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	3 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	225°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	LACOMBE , LA (3LA2)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	Company VFR
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	12:30 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:		Runway Surface Type:	Water
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	Water-calm
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	Traffic pattern

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 None	Latitude, Longitude:	30.28009,-91.240562(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Lupino, Nicole
Additional Participating Persons:	MARY E DONAHUE; BATON ROUGE , LA
Original Publish Date:	February 16, 2001
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=45301

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](#).