



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	OPHIR, Alaska	<b>Accident Number:</b>	ANC00LA030
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	February 25, 2000, 16:30 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N8221V
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Cessna 180H	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	1 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

## Analysis

The pilot reported he was taxiing his ski-equipped airplane on a snow-covered taxiway. In preparation for takeoff, he said he made a left turn toward the runway, and the right main landing gear ski penetrated the snow crust, allowing the right horizontal stabilizer to strike the snow and sustain substantial damage. The U.S. Government Alaska Supplement includes an airport listing for Ophir. Under the Airport Remarks section, it reads, in part: 'Unattended. Runway not usable and not maintained.'

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's selection of an unsuitable taxi area. A factor associated with the accident was the soft, snow-covered terrain.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: ON GROUND/WATER ENCOUNTER WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: TAXI - TO TAKEOFF

### Findings

1. AIRPORT FACILITIES, TAXIWAY CONDITION - SNOW COVERED
2. (F) AIRPORT FACILITIES, TAXIWAY CONDITION - SOFT
3. (C) UNSUITABLE TERRAIN OR TAKEOFF/LANDING/TAXI AREA - SELECTED - PILOT IN COMMAND



## Factual Information

On February 25, 2000, about 1630 Alaska standard time, a ski equipped Cessna 180H airplane, N8221V, received substantial damage while taxiing for takeoff at the Ophir airstrip, Ophir, Alaska. The solo airline transport pilot was not injured. The 14 CFR Part 91 flight departed McGrath, Alaska, about 1555, en route to Ophir. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed for the flight, and no flight plan was filed.

During a telephone conversation with the NTSB investigator-in-charge (IIC) on February 28, the pilot/owner of the airplane related he was flying with a group of other pilots and airplanes in support of the annual Iditarod dogsled race. He said he was landing at Ophir to put in a check point. He said he landed to the east, and was turning around at the east end of the airstrip for a departure to the west. During the turn, he said the right ski penetrated the snow crust, and dropped into soft snow, allowing the right horizontal stabilizer to contact the snow.

The NTSB IIC inspected the airplane on February 28 at Ward's Air in Anchorage, Alaska. The horizontal stabilizer's main spar was buckled.

The U.S. Government Alaska Supplement includes an airport listing for Ophir. Under the Airport Remarks section, it reads, in part: "Unattended. Runway not usable and not maintained."

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Airline transport	<b>Age:</b>	57, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	<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-w/ waivers/lim	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	June 11, 1998
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	UNK	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	4486 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1416 hours (Total, this make and model), 3057 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 17 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 16 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 11 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Cessna	<b>Registration:</b>	N8221V
<b>Model/Series:</b>	180H 180H	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal; Utility	<b>Serial Number:</b>	18051723
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Tailwheel; Ski/wheel	<b>Seats:</b>	4
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	July 1, 1999 Annual	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	2800 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	25 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	5478 Hrs	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Continental
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed, not activated	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	O-470-R
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	GARY R. RUSSEY	<b>Rated Power:</b>	230 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>		<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>		<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Observation Time:</b>		<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Clear	<b>Visibility</b>	100 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<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>		<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	-7°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	MCGRATH , AK (MCG )	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>		<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	15:55 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class G

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>	OPHIR Z17	<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	Snow
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>	575 ft msl	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	Snow;Soft
<b>Runway Used:</b>	29	<b>IFR Approach:</b>	None
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>	1500 ft / 40 ft	<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	Full stop;Traffic pattern

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 None	<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 None	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	55.919956,-159.490402(est)

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Labelle, James
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	ROBERT J MERCER; ANCHORAGE , AK
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	May 9, 2001
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class</a>
<b>Note:</b>	
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=48739">https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=48739</a>

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