



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	PARKER, Pennsylvania	<b>Accident Number:</b>	NYC00LA115
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	April 1, 2000, 17:00 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N737HB
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Mooney M-20F	<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 decided to conduct a simulated engine failure over an agricultural field, with an intended recovery at '60-70 feet above the ground.' When he was satisfied that he 'made the field,' a flock of geese distracted him, and the airplane struck a wire. The pilot then returned to the originating airport to assess the damage to the airplane.

## 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 an adequate visual lookout, due to his distraction with a flock of birds. A factor was the pilot's improper in flight decision to continue the simulated engine failure to too low of an altitude.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT  
Phase of Operation: DESCENT

### Findings

1. OBJECT - BIRD(S)
2. (C) VISUAL LOOKOUT - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (F) IN-FLIGHT PLANNING/DECISION - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. ALTITUDE - LOW - PILOT IN COMMAND



## Factual Information

On April 1, 2000, about 1700 Eastern Standard Time, a Mooney M-20F, N737HB, was substantially damaged while practicing a simulated engine failure, near Parker, Pennsylvania. The certificated private pilot was not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and no flight plan was filed for the flight between the Clarion County Airport (AXQ), Clarion, Pennsylvania, and the Venango Regional Airport (FKL), Franklin, Pennsylvania. The personal flight was conducted under 14 CFR Part 91.

The pilot stated that he departed about 1600. While en route, he decided to conduct a simulated engine failure over an agricultural field, with an intended recovery at "60-70 feet above the ground." When the pilot was satisfied that he "made the field," a flock of geese distracted him and he struck a wire. The pilot then returned to AXQ to assess the damage to the airplane.

A Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) inspector reported that the right wing, right aileron and the horizontal stabilizer were substantially damaged.

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Private	<b>Age:</b>	61, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 3 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	October 12, 1999
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	UNK	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	1081 hours (Total, all aircraft), 30 hours (Total, this make and model)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Mooney	<b>Registration:</b>	N737HB
<b>Model/Series:</b>	M-20F M-20F	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	670469
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Retractable - Tricycle	<b>Seats:</b>	4
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	October 11, 1999 Annual	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	2740 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	35 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	1600 Hrs	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Lycoming
<b>ELT:</b>		<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	IO-360
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	GARY GALLAGHER	<b>Rated Power:</b>	200 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>	YNG ,1183 ft msl	<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	42 Nautical Miles
<b>Observation Time:</b>	16:51 Local	<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	270°
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Scattered / 12000 ft AGL	<b>Visibility</b>	10 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	Broken / 22000 ft AGL	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	9 knots /	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	220°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	30 inches Hg	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	18°C / -2°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	CLARION , PA (AXQ )	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>	FRANKLIN , PA (FKL )	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	16:00 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class G

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>		<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>		<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	
<b>Runway Used:</b>	0	<b>IFR Approach:</b>	
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>		<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	Simulated forced landing

## 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>	41.089721,-79.679992(est)

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Cox, Paul
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	TERRY RICKER; ALLEGHENY , PA
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	March 2, 2001
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class</a>
<b>Note:</b>	The NTSB traveled to the scene of this accident.
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=48993">https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=48993</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](#).