



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	WASILLA, Alaska	Accident Number:	ANC00LA060
Date & Time:	May 19, 2000, 12:00 Local	Registration:	N49EB
Aircraft:	Piper PA-12	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 Minor, 1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot, holder of a student pilot certificate, was departing from a private airstrip with two passengers. A witness reported the airplane encountered a wind shear at tree top level, and crashed on the runway. An Alaska State Trooper responded to the accident scene and spoke with the pilot. The pilot told the trooper that he was planning to go hunting. The pilot said that he had accrued about 300 hours, and he also told the trooper that the airplane's annual inspection was expired. An FAA inspector responded to the accident scene. When he arrived, the pilot, with others assisting, were disassembling the airplane. The inspector reported that the damage to the airplane consisted of wrinkling of both sides of the fuselage. In addition, the airplane had damage to the right wing lift strut, the main landing gear was folded upward under the airplane, and the propeller was bent. The inspector said that the pilot refused to talk with him about the accident. The NTSB IIC received a telephone call from the pilot later the day of the accident. When asked about the details of the accident, the pilot refused to provide his name or any additional information. The NTSB Northwest Field Office received an NTSB Pilot/Operator report from the pilot's address of record. The form was unsigned, and indicated that after takeoff, the airplane lost lift when the wind direction changed at tree-top level. The takeoff was then aborted. FAA records indicate the pilot received a private pilot certificate six days after the accident.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's inadequate compensation for wind conditions during takeoff. A factor in the accident was a sudden wind shift.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER

Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings

1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - SUDDEN WINDSHIFT
2. (C) COMPENSATION FOR WIND CONDITIONS - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - ABORTED

Findings

3. TERRAIN CONDITION - RUNWAY

Factual Information

On May 19, 2000, about 1200 Alaska daylight time, a tundra tire equipped Piper PA-12 airplane, N49EB, sustained substantial damage during takeoff from the Anderson Lake Airstrip, a private airstrip about 4 miles north-northeast of Wasilla, Alaska. The airplane was being operated as a visual flight rules (VFR) personal flight, when the accident occurred. The airplane was operated by the pilot. The pilot, holder of a student pilot certificate, and one passenger, received minor injuries. The second passenger was not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed.

The president of the home owners association, where the airstrip is located, notified the Alaska State Trooper's office of the accident. During a telephone conversation with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigator-in-charge (IIC) on May 19, the association's president stated that he did not see the accident. However, he was told by the pilot that during takeoff toward the east (runway 08), the accident airplane encountered a wind shear at tree top level, and crashed on the runway.

An Alaska State Trooper responded to the accident scene. After verifying that there were no serious injuries, he obtained the names of the occupants of the airplane. During a telephone conversation with the NTSB IIC, the trooper reported that the pilot said he was planning to fly to Cordova, Alaska, to go hunting. The trooper said the pilot told him that the airplane's annual inspection was expired. When the trooper asked about his flight experience, the pilot reported he had accrued about 300 hours.

A Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) inspector, Anchorage Flight Standards District Office (FSDO), responded to the accident scene. When he arrived, the pilot, with others assisting, were disassembling the airplane. The inspector reported that the damage to the airplane consisted of wrinkling of both sides of the fuselage. In addition, the airplane had damage to the right wing lift strut, the main landing gear was folded upward under the airplane, and the propeller was bent. The inspector said that the pilot refused to talk with him about the accident.

The NTSB IIC received a telephone call from the pilot on May 19. When asked about the details of the accident, the pilot refused to provide his name or any additional information.

The NTSB Northwest Field Office sent a Pilot/Operator report (NTSB form 6120.1/2) to the pilot's address of record in Cordova. The form was returned unsigned, and noted the date of the accident was April 19, 2000. It contained an indication that the pilot held a private pilot certificate, and that he had accrued 81.3 hours. A review of FAA airmen records maintained at the FAA's Airmen Certification Branch, Oklahoma City, revealed the pilot was issued a private pilot certificate on May 25, 2000, six days after the accident.

A FAA airworthiness inspector located the airplane wreckage and maintenance records in Eagle River, Alaska, on July 17, 2000. The maintenance records indicated the last annual inspection on the airframe and engine was April 3, 1997.

The closest official weather observation station is Wasilla, Alaska, which is located 4 nautical miles southwest of the accident site. On May 19, 2000, at 1155, an automated weather observation system (AWOS) was reporting in part: Wind, 240 degrees (true) at 4 knots; visibility, 10 statute miles; clouds and sky condition, 2,900 feet broken, 4,200 feet overcast; temperature, 46 degrees F; dew point, 34 degrees F; altimeter, 29.79 inHg.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Student	Age:	20, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	November 17, 1999
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	81 hours (Total, all aircraft), 31 hours (Total, this make and model), 57 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N49EB
Model/Series:	PA-12 PA-12	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	12-2756
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	3
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	April 3, 1997 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1750 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:		Engine Model/Series:	O-320
Registered Owner:	LARRY HANCOCK	Rated Power:	150 Horsepower
Operator:	BENJAMIN P. HANCOCK	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:	PAW ,348 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	4 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	11:55 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	225°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 2900 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	4 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	216°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	8°C / 1°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	(0AK1)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	CORDOVA , AK (PACV)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	12:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	ANDERSON LAKE STRIP 0AK1	Runway Surface Type:	Gravel
Airport Elevation:	463 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	8	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	2200 ft / 60 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 Minor, 1 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 Minor, 1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Erickson, Scott
Additional Participating Persons:	DAVE LUCER (FAA); ANCHORAGE , AK
Original Publish Date:	May 30, 2001
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=49253

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](#).