



Aviation Investigation Final Report

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| Location: | SAN LUIS OBISPO, California | Accident Number: | LAX00LA270 |
| Date & Time: | July 18, 2000, 13:00 Local | Registration: | N2400P |
| Aircraft: | Piper PA-38-112 | Aircraft Damage: | Substantial |
| Defining Event: | | Injuries: | 1 None |
| Flight Conducted Under: | Part 91: General aviation - Personal | | |

Analysis

The pilot was taxiing from the ramp to the runway. Prior to releasing the parking brake to move out of the parking spot, he visually verified that there were no people or vehicles in the area. While conducting the brake check he looked down into the cockpit to verify that he had a standby option on his radio. He noted that he did not have a standby option and returned his attention to the outside of the airplane and started the airplane moving in a forward direction. When he looked up from inside the cockpit he saw a refueling truck had positioned itself outside of the yellow parking space line. He attempted to avoid the vehicle by engaging full left rudder and left brake; however, the right wingtip collided with the vehicle.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's inadequate visual lookout while taxiing to the runway, which resulted in his failure to see and avoid the fuel truck.

Findings

Occurrence #1: ON GROUND/WATER COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: TAXI - FROM LANDING

Findings

1. OBJECT - VEHICLE
2. (C) VISUAL LOOKOUT - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND



Factual Information

On July 18, 2000, at 1300 hours Pacific daylight time, a Piper PA-38-112, N2400P, collided with a stationary fuel truck while taxiing from the ramp to the runway at the San Luis Obispo, California, airport. The airplane, owned and operated by Mazzei Flying Service under the provisions of 14 CFR Part 91, was rented by the pilot for a cross-country, personal flight. The airplane sustained substantial damage to the right wing spar. The private pilot, the sole occupant, was not injured. The flight departed Fresno Yosemite International Airport, Fresno, California, about 1200, with a scheduled stop at the San Luis Obispo airport to refuel, and was scheduled to terminate back at the Fresno airport. Visual meteorological conditions existed for the personal flight and a visual flight rules (VFR) flight plan was filed.

In the pilot's written statement to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), he reported that after his airplane had been refueled he started the engine, asked for, and received clearance to taxi to the active runway for departure. Prior to releasing the parking brake, he visually verified that the area was clear of people and moving vehicles. While conducting the brake check, he looked down to double check that there was a standby option on the radio. He noted that was not an option and returned his attention to the outside of the airplane, and "started in motion." When he looked out, he saw that a refueling truck had come from around the corner and positioned itself outside the yellow parking space line. He attempted to maneuver to avoid the vehicle by engaging full left rudder and left brake. The pilot stated that he was not able to get the right wing clear and the wingtip collided with the vehicle.

Pilot Information

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| Certificate: | Private | Age: | 22, Male |
| Airplane Rating(s): | Single-engine land | Seat Occupied: | Left |
| 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 1 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim. | Last FAA Medical Exam: | May 23, 2000 |
| Occupational Pilot: | UNK | Last Flight Review or Equivalent: | |
| Flight Time: | 47 hours (Total, all aircraft), 47 hours (Total, this make and model), 10 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 47 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 23 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft) | | |

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

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|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Aircraft Make: | Piper | Registration: | N2400P |
| Model/Series: | PA-38-112 PA-38-112 | Aircraft Category: | Airplane |
| Year of Manufacture: | | Amateur Built: | |
| Airworthiness Certificate: | Normal | Serial Number: | 38-79A0974 |
| Landing Gear Type: | Tricycle | Seats: | 2 |
| Date/Type of Last Inspection: | July 7, 2000 100 hour | Certified Max Gross Wt.: | 1670 lbs |
| Time Since Last Inspection: | 42 Hrs | Engines: | 1 Reciprocating |
| Airframe Total Time: | 8931 Hrs | Engine Manufacturer: | Lycoming |
| ELT: | Installed, not activated | Engine Model/Series: | O-235-L2C |
| Registered Owner: | VAUGHN AND CYNTHIA MELCHER | Rated Power: | 112 Horsepower |
| Operator: | MAZZEI FLYING SERVICE | Operating Certificate(s) Held: | None |
| Operator Does Business As: | | Operator Designator Code: | |

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

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|---|----------------------------------|---|-------------|
| Conditions at Accident Site: | Visual (VMC) | Condition of Light: | Day |
| Observation Facility, Elevation: | SBP ,209 ft msl | Distance from Accident Site: | |
| Observation Time: | 13:56 Local | Direction from Accident Site: | |
| Lowest Cloud Condition: | Clear | Visibility | 10 miles |
| Lowest Ceiling: | None | Visibility (RVR): | |
| Wind Speed/Gusts: | 12 knots / 24 knots | Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Wind Direction: | 310° | Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Altimeter Setting: | 30 inches Hg | Temperature/Dew Point: | 75°C / 54°C |
| Precipitation and Obscuration: | No Obscuration; No Precipitation | | |
| Departure Point: | FRESNO , CA (FAT) | Type of Flight Plan Filed: | None |
| Destination: | (SBP) | Type of Clearance: | None |
| Departure Time: | 12:00 Local | Type of Airspace: | Class D |

Airport Information

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|-----------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|---------|
| Airport: | SAN LUIS OBISPO SBP | Runway Surface Type: | Asphalt |
| Airport Elevation: | 209 ft msl | Runway Surface Condition: | |
| Runway Used: | 0 | IFR Approach: | None |
| Runway Length/Width: | | VFR Approach/Landing: | None |

Wreckage and Impact Information

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|----------------------------|--------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Crew Injuries: | 1 None | Aircraft Damage: | Substantial |
| Passenger Injuries: | | Aircraft Fire: | None |
| Ground Injuries: | N/A | Aircraft Explosion: | None |
| Total Injuries: | 1 None | Latitude, Longitude: | 35.249439,-120.61985(est) |

Administrative Information

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|--|---|
| Investigator In Charge (IIC): | Cornejo, Tealeye |
| Additional Participating Persons: | HARDIE DEGUZMAN; SAN JOSE , CA |
| Original Publish Date: | November 1, 2001 |
| Last Revision Date: | |
| Investigation Class: | Class |
| Note: | The NTSB traveled to the scene of this accident. |
| Investigation Docket: | https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=49780 |

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](#).