



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	CHENEGA BAY, Alaska	<b>Accident Number:</b>	ANC00LA104
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	August 16, 2000, 20:30 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N78635
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Piper PA-11	<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 stated he had established a long, flat, final approach to land on the 1000 feet long by 40 feet wide airstrip. He stated there was a strong crosswind from the right, and the sun was low and glaring off the water. He indicated that 10 feet above the airstrip the propeller contacted a single tall bush which he had not seen. He said the airplane stopped flying, spun around, and came to rest on the airstrip. The airplane sustained substantial damage to the left wing, and the empennage.

## 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 lookout. Factors involved in this accident were sunglare, and a tall bush next to the airstrip.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER  
Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

### Findings

1. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - HIGH VEGETATION
  2. (C) VISUAL LOOKOUT - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
  3. (F) LIGHT CONDITION - SUNGLARE
-

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER  
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

## Factual Information

On August 16, 2000, about 2030 Alaska daylight time, a tundra tire equipped Piper PA-11 airplane, N78635, sustained substantial damage when it contacted brush during landing at the MacLeod Harbor Airstrip, Montague Island, Alaska, at 59 degrees, 52.3 minutes north latitude, 147 degrees, 45.11 minutes west longitude. The solo private pilot was not injured. The flight was conducted under 14 CFR Part 91, as a personal flight. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the accident, and a VFR flight plan was filed.

During a telephone interview with the NTSB investigator-in-charge on August 17, the pilot stated he had established a long, flat, final approach to land on the 1000 feet long by 40 feet wide airstrip. He stated there was a strong crosswind from the right, and the sun was low and glaring off the water. He indicated that 10 feet above the airstrip the propeller contacted a single tall bush which he had not seen. He said the airplane stopped flying, spun around, and came to rest on the airstrip. The airplane sustained substantial damage to the left wing, and the empennage.

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Private	<b>Age:</b>	61, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Front
<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 23, 1998
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	No	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	855 hours (Total, all aircraft), 825 hours (Total, this make and model), 825 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 34 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 16 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Piper	<b>Registration:</b>	N78635
<b>Model/Series:</b>	PA-11 PA-11	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	11-1396
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Tailwheel	<b>Seats:</b>	2
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	March 1, 2000 Annual	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	1450 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	73 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	8064 Hrs	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Lycoming
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed, activated, aided in locating accident	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	O-290-17
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	JOSEPH G. HEPLER	<b>Rated Power:</b>	125 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>	Scattered / 4500 ft AGL	<b>Visibility</b>	10 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	10 knots / 12 knots	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	240°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>		<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	16°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	ANCHORAGE , AK (Z41 )	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	VFR
<b>Destination:</b>		<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	18:00 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class G

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>	MACLEOD HARBOR AIRSTRIP	<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	Gravel
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>	20 ft msl	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	
<b>Runway Used:</b>	27	<b>IFR Approach:</b>	None
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>	1000 ft / 40 ft	<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	Full stop;Valley/terrain following

## 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>	60.789932,-145.610809(est)

## Administrative Information

**Investigator In Charge (IIC):** Thomas, Matthew

**Additional Participating Persons:** MAURICE HENDRICKSON(FAA FSDO); ANCHORAGE , AK

**Original Publish Date:** November 6, 2001

**Last Revision Date:**

**Investigation Class:** [Class](#)

**Note:**

**Investigation Docket:** <https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=50983>

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](#).