



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Mercer Island, Washington	Accident Number:	SEA01LA096
Date & Time:	May 6, 2001, 13:45 Local	Registration:	N9732B
Aircraft:	Cessna 180A	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	3 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

After circling the area to observe the water conditions, the pilot executed a water landing in his float-equipped airplane. He touched down in relatively calm conditions, but almost immediately encountered a large wave/swell that he had not noticed from the air. The aircraft was momentarily launched back into the air, and the pilot applied full power for a go-around. Although the pilot initiated a go-around, the aircraft had already slowed to a point where it could not maintain flight. It therefore dropped back to the surface of the water with sufficient force to cause substantial damage to the aircraft structure.

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 during an approach and landing in open water. Factors include a large wave/swell at the location where the pilot elected to land his float-equipped airplane.

Findings

Occurrence #1: ON GROUND/WATER ENCOUNTER WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

Findings

1. (C) VISUAL LOOKOUT - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - LARGE WAVE/SWELL

Factual Information

On May 6, 2001, approximately 1345 Pacific daylight time, a float-equipped Cessna 180A, N9732B, impacted the water during a landing on the waters of Lake Washington, near Mercer Island, Washington. The commercial pilot and his two passengers were not injured, but the aircraft, which is owned by a partnership of which the pilot is a member, sustained substantial damage. The 14 CFR Part 91 personal pleasure flight, which departed the waters of Roche Island, Washington, about one hour and fifteen minutes earlier, was being operated in visual meteorological conditions. No flight plan had been filed. There was no report of an ELT activation.

According to the pilot, he was landing in relatively smooth water in light and variable wind conditions. Just after touchdown, the aircraft encountered a large rolling wave that the pilot had not noticed prior to landing. As a result of passing over the wave, the aircraft was thrown back into the air to a height of at least 10 feet. At that point the pilot added power in order to initiate a go-around, but the aircraft did not have sufficient airspeed to maintain flight. It therefore dropped back onto the surface of the water with sufficient force to create substantial damage in the aircraft structure.

Although the pilot noticed a couple of small boat wakes when he circled the area prior to landing, he did not notice the large rolling wave/swell that he subsequently encountered. It was his opinion that the wave had been created by a large boat that had departed the area prior to his landing.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	50, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	February 15, 2000
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	November 7, 2000
Flight Time:	560 hours (Total, all aircraft), 250 hours (Total, this make and model), 470 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 52 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 9 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N9732B
Model/Series:	180A	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	18050030
Landing Gear Type:	Float	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	February 15, 2001 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2820 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	5348 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-470-K17F
Registered Owner:	Wavebusters, Inc.	Rated Power:	230 Horsepower
Operator:	Richard M. Pattison	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:	Wavebusters, Inc.	Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	20 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	16°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Roche Harbor, WA (9S1)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Mercer Island, WA	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	12:30 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	2 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 None	Latitude, Longitude:	47.559291,-122.220825(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Anderson, Kurt
Additional Participating Persons:	Dave May; Seattle FSDO
Original Publish Date:	July 30, 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=52284

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