



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Uvalde, Texas	Accident Number:	FTW01LA157
Date & Time:	June 28, 2001, 18:45 Local	Registration:	N6474P
Aircraft:	Piper PA-24-250	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot stated that on descent he was high and fast. He entered downwind at 3000 feet, and before he turned base leg, he realized he was still too high so he lowered the flaps. He stated that during the final approach, he used full flaps with a speed of 80 mph. About one-half mile from the runway, he positioned the landing gear switch in the down position, but did not immediately check the gear down lights to verify if the gear was down. The pilot stated "he didn't check the gear down light until over the runway, then no light. Too late to go-around." The airplane touched down and slid approximately 170 yards before coming to a stop on the runway. When the pilot opened the door and exited the airplane, he noted black smoke coming from beneath the airplane. The ensuing fire consumed the rear portion of the fuselage. When asked how the accident could have been prevented, the pilot replied "do not break from procedures of your normal landings."

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to verify the landing gear was down and locked, which resulted in a wheels up landing and subsequent ground fire.

Findings

Occurrence #1: WHEELS UP LANDING
Phase of Operation: LANDING

Findings

1. GEAR DOWN AND LOCKED - NOT VERIFIED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: FIRE

Phase of Operation: LANDING

Factual Information

On June 28, 2001, approximately 1845 central daylight time, a Piper PA-24-250, N6474P, sustained substantial damage during a wheels up landing on runway 15 at the Garner Field Airport in Uvalde, Texas. The private pilot, sole occupant and operator of the airplane, was not injured. The airplane was registered to a private individual. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed for the 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91 personal cross-country flight and no flight plan was filed. The airplane departed from Carrizo Springs, Texas, approximately 1830, with a destination of Uvalde.

During a telephone interview, the pilot stated that on descent he was "high and fast." He entered downwind at 3000 feet, and before he turned base leg, he realized he was "still too high" so he lowered the flaps. He did not move the landing gear switch to the down position until the airplane was on final approach. He did not check for a landing gear down and locked green light until he was on short final. When he did check for a green light, he noted that it was not illuminated. At that point, he added power to go around; however, the engine "sputtered", and he elected to reduce power and land with the wheels up. The airplane touched down and slid approximately 170 yards before coming to a stop on the runway. When the pilot opened the door and exited the airplane, he noted black smoke coming from beneath the airplane. The ensuing fire consumed the rear portion of the fuselage.

According to the pilot's written statement in the NTSB Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident Report, he stated that during the approach he used full flaps with a speed of 80 mph. About one-half mile from the runway he positioned the landing gear switch in the down position, but did not immediately check the landing gear down lights to verify that the gear was down and locked. The pilot stated he "didn't check the gear down light until over the runway, then no light. Too late to go-around." When asked in the pilot report of how the accident could have been prevented, the pilot stated "do not break from procedures of your normal landings."

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	50, 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 3 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	December 6, 2000
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	March 31, 2000
Flight Time:	684 hours (Total, all aircraft), 157 hours (Total, this make and model), 684 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 40 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 30 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N6474P
Model/Series:	PA-24-250	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	24-1589
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2300 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	5266 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	O-540-A1C5
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	250 Horsepower
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	HDO,930 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	31 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	17:51 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	80°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 6000 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	11 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	180°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.01 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	36°C / 16°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Carrizo Springs, TX (CZT)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	(UVA)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	18:30 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	GARNER FIELD UVA	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	900 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	15	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	2500 ft / 100 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Full stop

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	On-ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	29.150375,-100.020698(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Snyder, Georgia
Additional Participating Persons:	Robert W Van Loon; FAA FSDO; San Antonio, TX
Original Publish Date:	October 9, 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=52584

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](#).