



Aviation Investigation Final Report

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|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| Location: | Tucson, Arizona | Accident Number: | LAX01LA226 |
| Date & Time: | June 28, 2001, 13:30 Local | Registration: | N311X |
| Aircraft: | Mooney M20C | Aircraft Damage: | Substantial |
| Defining Event: | | Injuries: | 1 None |
| Flight Conducted Under: | Part 91: General aviation - Personal | | |

Analysis

After landing, the pilot intended to taxi to a fixed base operator via an established taxiway. While proceeding toward the intended taxiway, the pilot redirected his attention toward military jet airplane traffic that was in front of him but proceeded in another direction. Thereafter, the pilot became confused regarding his position and turned onto a perimeter road believing that it was the intended taxiway. As the pilot proceeded on the road, he collided with the back side of an automotive traffic sign.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The airplane's collision with a perimeter roadway vehicular traffic sign due to the pilot's diverted attention and inadequate visual lookout while taxiing from landing. A contributing factor was the lack of sign conspicuity.

Findings

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

Findings

1. OBJECT - SIGN
2. (C) VISUAL LOOKOUT - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) DIVERTED ATTENTION - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. WRONG TAXI ROUTE - INADVERTENT USE - PILOT IN COMMAND

5. UNSAFE/HAZARDOUS CONDITION - NOT RECOGNIZED - PILOT IN COMMAND
6. (F) VISUAL/AURAL DETECTION - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

On June 28, 2001, about 1330 hours mountain standard time, a Mooney M20C, N311X, owned and operated by the pilot, taxied into a motor vehicle traffic sign at the Tucson International Airport, Tucson, Arizona. The airplane was substantially damaged, and the commercial pilot was not injured. The personal flight was performed under 14 CFR Part 91. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time, and no flight plan was filed. The flight originated from the La Cholla Airpark, in Tucson, about 1300.

Information received from the Tucson airport police indicated that after the pilot landed he had intended to taxi to a fixed base operator via taxiway Delta. However, he became confused and turned onto a perimeter road, believing that it was the taxiway. As the pilot was proceeding on the road, he collided with the back side of a "yield" traffic sign. The pilot reported that just prior to the collision he had directed his attention toward military jet airplane traffic that was in front of him and proceeding away. He also indicated that the sign was small and inconspicuous.

Pilot Information

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| Certificate: | Commercial; Flight instructor | Age: | 76, 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): | Airplane single-engine | Toxicology Performed: | No |
| Medical Certification: | Class 3 With waivers/limitations | Last FAA Medical Exam: | June 29, 2001 |
| Occupational Pilot: | UNK | Last Flight Review or Equivalent: | December 16, 2000 |
| Flight Time: | 4077 hours (Total, all aircraft), 265 hours (Total, this make and model), 3967 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 22 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 10 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft) | | |

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

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|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Aircraft Make: | Mooney | Registration: | N311X |
| Model/Series: | M20C | Aircraft Category: | Airplane |
| Year of Manufacture: | | Amateur Built: | |
| Airworthiness Certificate: | Normal | Serial Number: | 2592 |
| Landing Gear Type: | Retractable - Tricycle | Seats: | 4 |
| Date/Type of Last Inspection: | December 14, 2000 Annual | Certified Max Gross Wt.: | 2575 lbs |
| Time Since Last Inspection: | 29 Hrs | Engines: | 1 Reciprocating |
| Airframe Total Time: | 3357 Hrs at time of accident | Engine Manufacturer: | Lycoming |
| ELT: | Installed, not activated | Engine Model/Series: | O-360-A1D |
| Registered Owner: | Dale Hodgson | Rated Power: | 180 Horsepower |
| Operator: | | Operating Certificate(s) Held: | None |

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

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|---|----------------------------------|---|------------------|
| Conditions at Accident Site: | Visual (VMC) | Condition of Light: | Day |
| Observation Facility, Elevation: | TUS,2643 ft msl | Distance from Accident Site: | 0 Nautical Miles |
| Observation Time: | 13:55 Local | Direction from Accident Site: | |
| Lowest Cloud Condition: | Few / 11000 ft AGL | Visibility | 10 miles |
| Lowest Ceiling: | None | Visibility (RVR): | |
| Wind Speed/Gusts: | 7 knots / | Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Wind Direction: | 290° | Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual: | / |
| Altimeter Setting: | 30.01 inches Hg | Temperature/Dew Point: | 39°C / 7°C |
| Precipitation and Obscuration: | No Obscuration; No Precipitation | | |
| Departure Point: | Tucson, AZ (40E) | Type of Flight Plan Filed: | None |
| Destination: | Tucson, AZ (TUS) | Type of Clearance: | VFR |
| Departure Time: | | Type of Airspace: | Class D |

Airport Information

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|-----------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|---------|
| Airport: | Tucson International TUS | Runway Surface Type: | |
| Airport Elevation: | 2643 ft msl | Runway Surface Condition: | Unknown |
| Runway Used: | | IFR Approach: | Unknown |
| Runway Length/Width: | | VFR Approach/Landing: | Unknown |

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: | 32.116111,-110.941108 |

Administrative Information

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| Investigator In Charge (IIC): | Pollack, Wayne |
| Additional Participating Persons: | Mike Halloran; FAA Flight Standards District Office; Scottsdale, AZ |
| Original Publish Date: | August 28, 2002 |
| Last Revision Date: | |
| Investigation Class: | Class |
| Note: | The NTSB traveled to the scene of this accident. |
| Investigation Docket: | https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=52597 |

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](#).