Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	ARCTIC VILLAGE, Alaska	**Accident Number:**	ANC01LA111
Date & Time:	August 7, 2001, 15:00 Local	**Registration:**	N81958
Aircraft:	Cessna 180A	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Defining Event:		**Injuries:**	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The airline transport certificated pilot intended to fly to a remote river, but the intended route of flight was obscured by clouds over nearby mountain tops. The pilot said he decided to land toward the north on a gravel bar along the river. The landing area was about 800 feet long, and 100 feet wide. The pilot said he made three low passes over the gravel bar, and then began the landing approach. He said he applied engine carburetor heat when he was abeam the landing threshold. As the airplane descended toward the ground, the pilot noticed the gravel bar contained larger rocks than he liked. He began a go-around about 30 feet above the ground by applying full engine power. The pilot said the engine sputtered and the airplane settled onto the gravel. As the airplane touched down, the engine returned to full power. The airplane lifted off, but collided with willow bushes and nosed over. The pilot said he encountered continuous carburetor icing during the flight, and applied carburetor heat every few minutes.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's improper use of carburetor heat during a go-around. Factors in the accident were carburetor icing conditions, and high vegetation in the landing area.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(PARTIAL) - NONMECHANICAL
Phase of Operation: GO-AROUND (VFR)

Findings
1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - CARBURETOR ICING CONDITIONS
2. (C) CARBURETOR HEAT - IMPROPER USE OF - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: GO-AROUND (VFR)

Findings
3. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - HIGH VEGETATION

Occurrence #3: NOSE OVER
Phase of Operation: GO-AROUND (VFR)

Factual Information

On August 7, 2001, about 1500 Alaska daylight time, a tundra tire-equipped Cessna 180A airplane, N81958, sustained substantial damage during a go-around at a remote river gravel bar, about 35 miles north of Arctic Village, Alaska. The airplane was being operated as a visual flight rules (VFR) cross-country personal flight when the accident occurred. The airplane was operated by the pilot. The airline transport certificated pilot, the sole occupant, was not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed. The flight originated at the Fairbanks International Airport, Fairbanks, Alaska, about 1300.

During a telephone conversation with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigator-in-charge (IIC), on August 8th, the pilot reported he intended to fly to the Hulahula River, but the intended route of flight was obscured by clouds over nearby mountain tops. The pilot said he decided to land toward the north on a gravel bar along the river. The landing area was about 800 feet long, and 100 feet wide. The pilot said he made three low passes over the gravel bar, and then began the landing approach. He said he applied engine carburetor heat when he was abeam the landing threshold. As the airplane descended toward the ground, the pilot noticed the gravel bar contained larger rocks than he liked. He began a go-around about 30 feet above the ground by applying full engine power. The pilot said the engine sputtered and the airplane settled onto the gravel. As the airplane touched down, the engine returned to full power. The airplane lifted off, but collided with willow bushes and nosed over.

The pilot described the weather conditions as: Wind, 360 degrees at five to ten knots; clouds and sky condition, 3,000 feet broken; visibility, 10 miles in haze; temperature, 44 degrees F. In his statement submitted with the NTSB Pilot/Operator report (NTSB form 6120.1/2), the pilot said he encountered continuous carburetor icing during the flight, and applied carburetor heat every few minutes.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline transport; Commercial; Flight instructor	**Age:**	42,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land	**Seat Occupied:**	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	**Restraint Used:**	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	**Second Pilot Present:**	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane multi-engine; Airplane single-engine; Instrument airplane	**Toxicology Performed:**	No
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim	**Last FAA Medical Exam:**	March 8, 2001
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	**Last Flight Review or Equivalent:**	July 10, 2001
Flight Time:	8000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 110 hours (Total, this make and model), 2000 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 300 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 80 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	**Registration:**	N81958
Model/Series:	180A	**Aircraft Category:**	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		**Amateur Built:**	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	**Serial Number:**	32941
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	**Seats:**	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	September 21, 2000 Annual	**Certified Max Gross Wt.:**	2650 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	107 Hrs	**Engines:**	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	4744 Hrs at time of accident	**Engine Manufacturer:**	Continental
ELT:	Installed, activated, aided in locating accident	**Engine Model/Series:**	O-470
Registered Owner:	MICHAEL C. HOLMAN	**Rated Power:**	235 Horsepower
Operator:		**Operating Certificate(s) Held:**	None

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:		**Visibility**	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 3000 ft AGL	**Visibility (RVR):**	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots / 10 knots	**Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:**	/
Wind Direction:	360°	**Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:**	/
Altimeter Setting:		**Temperature/Dew Point:**	7°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	N/A - None - Haze		
Departure Point:	FAIRBANKS, AK (PAFA)	**Type of Flight Plan Filed:**	None
Destination:	ARCTIC VILLAGE, AK	**Type of Clearance:**	None
Departure Time:	13:00 Local	**Type of Airspace:**	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

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:**	68.632225,-144.897216

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Erickson, Scott
Additional Participating Persons:	CALEB GLICK; FAA-AL-FAI FASO 01; FAIRBANKS, AK
Original Publish Date:	February 20, 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=53031