



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Palmer, Alaska	Accident Number:	ANC01LA045
Date & Time:	March 31, 2001, 17:00 Local	Registration:	N4606Z
Aircraft:	Piper PA-22-108	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The certificated private pilot was departing from a snow-covered 800 feet long site, in a tundra-tire equipped airplane. The pilot said that as he neared the end of the site, just before the airplane became airborne, the right main wheel hit a rut, and the right main landing gear collapsed. The airplane veered to the right, and collided with a stand of willows.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's selection of an unsuitable takeoff area. A factor associated with the accident was rough/uneven terrain.

Findings

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

Findings

1. (C) UNSUITABLE TERRAIN OR TAKEOFF/LANDING/TAXI AREA - SELECTED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - ROUGH/UNEVEN

Occurrence #2: GEAR COLLAPSED
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - ROLL/RUN

Occurrence #3: ON GROUND/WATER ENCOUNTER WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - ROLL/RUN

Findings

3. TERRAIN CONDITION - HIGH VEGETATION

Factual Information

On March 31, 2001, about 1700 Alaska standard time, N4606Z, a tundra tire-equipped Piper PA-22-108 airplane, converted to a tailwheel configuration, sustained substantial damage during takeoff from an off airport site, about 23 miles southeast of Palmer, Alaska. The certificated private pilot, and the one passenger aboard, were not injured. The airplane was being operated as a visual flight rules (VFR) personal flight under Title 14, CFR Part 91, when the accident occurred. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and no flight plan was filed. The flight originated about 1300, from the Wasilla Airport, Wasilla, Alaska.

During a telephone conversation with the National Transportation Safety Board investigator-in-charge on April 1, the pilot reported that he was departing to the west from a snow-covered 800 feet long site. He said that as he neared the end of the site, just before the airplane became airborne, the right main wheel hit a rut, and the right main landing gear collapsed. He said the airplane veered to the right, and collided with a stand of willow trees. The airplane sustained substantial damage to both wings and fuselage.

The pilot said that there were no preaccident mechanical anomalies with the airplane.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	40, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Front
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 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	April 8, 2000
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	105 hours (Total, all aircraft), 50 hours (Total, this make and model), 61 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 35 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 15 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N4606Z
Model/Series:	PA-22-108	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	22-8120
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	June 9, 2000 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1550 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	93 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3605 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-290-D2
Registered Owner:	Jeffrey R. Clements	Rated Power:	135 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:	Scattered / 3000 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:		Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29.62 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	2°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Palmer , AK	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Wasilla , AK (WAS)	Type of Clearance:	
Departure Time:	13:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 None	Latitude, Longitude:	61.583332,-149.084167

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Johnson, Clinton
Additional Participating Persons:	Ralph J Pack; Federal Aviation Administration ; Anchorage , AK
Original Publish Date:	February 20, 2002
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=53188

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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](#).