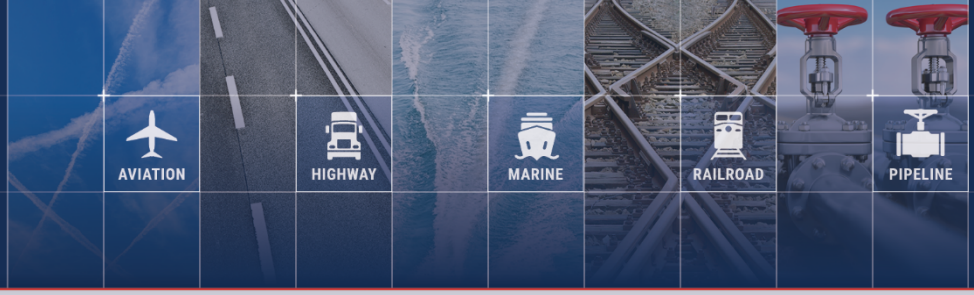

Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	CAPE MAY, New Jersey	**Accident Number:**	NYC98FAMS1
Date & Time:	April 4, 1998, 19:42 Local	**Registration:**	N4477C
Aircraft:	Cessna 195	**Aircraft Damage:**	Destroyed
Defining Event:		**Injuries:**	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

A Cessna 195, N4477C, performed a night forced landing to the water, about 2 miles south-southwest of Cape May, New Jersey. Neither the airplane nor the certificated commercial pilot have been recovered. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed for the personal flight that departed Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, destined for Atlantic City International Airport (ACHY), Atlantic City, New Jersey. An instrument flight rules (FIR) flight plan had been filed for the flight conducted under 14 CFR Part 91.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: Undetermined.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - NORMAL

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - EMERGENCY

Occurrence #3: DITCHING
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY DESCENT/LANDING

Factual Information

On April 4, 1998, at 1942 Eastern Standard Time, a Cessna 195, N4477C, performed a forced landing to the water, about 2 miles south-southwest of Cape May, New Jersey. Neither the airplane nor the certificated commercial pilot have been recovered. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed for the personal flight that departed Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, about 1524, destined for Atlantic City International Airport (ACY), Atlantic City, New Jersey. An instrument flight rules (IFR) flight plan had been filed for the flight conducted under 14 CFR Part 91.

A review of a recording of the Air Traffic Control (ATC) communications, revealed that the pilot had been talking to the Dover Air Force Base Approach Control. When the airplane was about 7 miles southeast of the Waterloo VOR, the Dover controller advised the pilot to contact the ACY Approach control. When the pilot contacted the ACY controller, he stated that he was descending from 5,500 feet, to 5,000 feet, and requested to continue the descent to 3,000 feet.

The ACY controller cleared the airplane down to 3,000 feet, and direct to the Sea Isle VOR. About 1 1/2 minutes later the pilot stated, "Mayday." When the ACY controller asked what help the pilot needed, the pilot stated, "We've lost our engine it appears like." The controller then advised the pilot that Cape May Airport was at his 11 O'clock position, and 12 miles, and suggested a heading of 040 degrees.

The ACY controller contacted the Dover controller by land line, and asked if the airplane was over water. The Dover controller responded that the airplane was over water, and about 3 miles closer to the New Jersey coast.

A commercial airline pilot on the ACY radio frequency transmitted suggested items that the Cessna pilot could check. The Cessna 195 pilot reported that the carburetor heat was on, and the mixture was in. In response to a suggestion to check the fuel selector, the Cessna 195 pilot replied, " We're running out of ground here."

The ACY and Dover controllers conferred on the land line again, and both stated that the airplane disappeared from radar about 2 miles south of the New Jersey coast.

A pilot that flew a Cessna 210 through the Atlantic City area about 1900, April 4, 1998, was interviewed by telephone. During the interview, the pilot stated he departed Goldsboro, North Carolina, for White Plains, New York, on April 4, 1998. He departed on an IFR flight plan, about 1700, and initially climbed to 11,000 feet, where he was on top of the cloud layers. In the vicinity of Franklin, Virginia, he obtained a clearance to 13,000 feet to stay on top of the clouds, because the tops had risen. Then in the vicinity of Cape Charles, Virginia, he obtained a

clearance to 15,000 feet, again, to stay on top of the rising cloud layers. While in the vicinity of Norfolk, Virginia, he heard pilot reports of light rime icing at 7,000 feet.

The Cessna 210 pilot reported that he was at 15,000 feet, south of Waterloo VOR, about 1900. Due to the reports of icing that he had heard, and anticipating the descent in the New York area, he requested a quick descent from ATC down to 5,000 feet. The pilot believed that he was over the Delaware Bay when he reached 5,000 feet. He recalled the outside air temperature was minus 1 to minus 2 degrees C. He was still in clouds. When he turned on his landing light, he observed light to moderate wet/slushy snow on the windshield. He then requested, and was issued, 3,000 feet. As he descended through 3,500 feet the wet snow disappeared. When he reached 3,000 feet, he was clear of the clouds. The visibility was good, and their was a light rain. He did not encounter icing at 3,000 feet.

The United States Coast Guard commenced a search and rescue (SAR) operation the evening of April 4, 1998. About 1930, April 5, 1998, the SAR was ceased, after no contacts were developed.

A private search was commenced on April 6, 1998, and has continued with no reported findings.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	**Age:**	Male
Airplane Rating(s):		**Seat Occupied:**	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):		**Restraint Used:**	
Instrument Rating(s):		**Second Pilot Present:**	No
Instructor Rating(s):		**Toxicology Performed:**	No
Medical Certification:	Unknown Unknown	**Last FAA Medical Exam:**	
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	**Last Flight Review or Equivalent:**	
Flight Time:			

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	**Registration:**	N4477C
Model/Series:	195 195	**Aircraft Category:**	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		**Amateur Built:**	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Utility	**Serial Number:**	
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	**Seats:**	
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	**Certified Max Gross Wt.:**	
Time Since Last Inspection:		**Engines:**	1 Unknown
Airframe Total Time:		**Engine Manufacturer:**	
ELT:		**Engine Model/Series:**	
Registered Owner:	LYLE H. DAVIS	**Rated Power:**	
Operator:		**Operating Certificate(s) Held:**	None
Operator Does Business As:		**Operator Designator Code:**	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	**Condition of Light:**	Night/dark
Observation Facility, Elevation:	ACY	**Distance from Accident Site:**	
Observation Time:	19:11 Local	**Direction from Accident Site:**	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown	**Visibility**	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 3200 ft AGL	**Visibility (RVR):**	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	6 knots /	**Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:**	/
Wind Direction:	10°	**Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:**	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	**Temperature/Dew Point:**	5°C / 4°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	MYRTLE BEACH , SC (MYR)	**Type of Flight Plan Filed:**	IFR
Destination:	ATLANTIC CITY , NJ (ACY)	**Type of Clearance:**	IFR
Departure Time:	00:00 Local	**Type of Airspace:**	Class B

Airport Information

Airport:		**Runway Surface Type:**	
Airport Elevation:		**Runway Surface Condition:**	
Runway Used:	0	**IFR Approach:**	
Runway Length/Width:		**VFR Approach/Landing:**	Forced landing

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	**Aircraft Damage:**	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:		**Aircraft Fire:**	Unknown
Ground Injuries:	N/A	**Aircraft Explosion:**	Unknown
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal	**Latitude, Longitude:**	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Pearce, Robert
Additional Participating Persons:	
Original Publish Date:	November 30, 2007
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=53388

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.