



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	San Jose, California	Accident Number:	LAX02LA095
Date & Time:	February 24, 2002, 16:35 Local	Registration:	N7604P
Aircraft:	Piper PA-24-250	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

Upon exhausting the airplane's fuel on approach to the destination airport, the pilot made a forced landing on a street and collided with an automobile. The pilot subsequently reported that he had not refueled the airplane prior to departing on the return portion of a round-robin cross country flight. The pilot also reported that he had evidently miscalculated the airplane engine's fuel consumption rate. According to the pilot, no mechanical malfunction was experienced during the flight.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's inadequate planning and improper fuel consumption calculation, which resulted in fuel exhaustion.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(TOTAL) - NONMECHANICAL
Phase of Operation: APPROACH

Findings

1. (C) FLUID,FUEL - EXHAUSTION
2. (C) REFUELING - NOT PERFORMED - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) PLANNING/DECISION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND

4. (C) FUEL CONSUMPTION CALCULATIONS - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING

Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY DESCENT/LANDING

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT

Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING

Findings

5. OBJECT - VEHICLE

Factual Information

On February 24, 2002, about 1635 Pacific standard time, a Piper PA-24-250, N7604P, experienced a total loss of engine power on approach to the Reid-Hillview of Santa Clara County Airport, San Jose, California. The pilot made a forced landing on a street about 2 miles from the airport and collided with an automobile. The airplane was substantially damaged. Neither the automobile occupants nor the commercial pilot was injured. The airplane was operated by Amelia Reid Aviation, San Jose. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and no flight plan was filed. The flight was performed under the provisions of 14 CFR Part 91, and it originated from Santa Barbara, California, about 1500.

The pilot verbally reported to the National Transportation Safety Board investigator that the airplane's fuel tanks were full upon his departure from San Jose earlier in the day. He flew to Santa Barbara and did not refuel the airplane. Thereafter, the pilot attempted to fly back to San Jose. The pilot indicated that he evidently had just "miscalculated" the airplane engine's fuel burn off rate and had exhausted the available fuel. The pilot did not report that he had experienced any mechanical malfunction with the airplane.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Flight instructor	Age:	60, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-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:	August 24, 2001
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	September 24, 2001
Flight Time:	2500 hours (Total, all aircraft), 15 hours (Total, this make and model), 2306 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 13 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 13 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N7604P
Model/Series:	PA-24-250	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	24-2815
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	February 12, 2002 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2800 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	5 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	2562 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	O-540-A1A5
Registered Owner:	Amelia C. Reid	Rated Power:	250 Horsepower
Operator:	Amelia Reid Aviation	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:	Amelia Reid Aviation	Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	RHV,133 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	2 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	16:47 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	322°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	30 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	7 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	320°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.14 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	18°C / 10°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Santa Barbara, CA (SBA)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	San Jose, CA (RHV)	Type of Clearance:	VFR
Departure Time:	15:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class D

Airport Information

Airport:	Reid-Hillview of Santa ClaraCo RHV	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	133 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Unknown
Runway Used:		IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	Forced landing;Straight-in

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:	37.299446,-121.803054

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Pollack, Wayne
Additional Participating Persons:	Mike Schaadt; Federal Aviation Administration; San Jose, CA
Original Publish Date:	June 2, 2004
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=54250

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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](#).