



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	SKWENTNA, Alaska	Accident Number:	ANC02LA065
Date & Time:	June 30, 2002, 09:30 Local	Registration:	N1078F
Aircraft:	Cessna 185	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	3 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The commercial certificated pilot was landing the tundra tire-equipped airplane at an airstrip next to a remote lodge. The dirt surface airstrip is oriented north/south, and is about 1,200 feet long by 20 feet wide. The pilot said he was landing toward the north, and touched down about two feet short of the airstrip threshold. The right main landing gear struck a log stump that was concealed by bushes, just short of the threshold. The right main gear was torn off the airplane, and the right wing struck the ground.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to attain the proper touchdown point resulting in an undershoot, and an in-flight collision with a log during the landing flare. A contributing factor in the accident was a hidden obstruction.

Findings

Occurrence #1: UNDERSHOOT
Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings
1. (C) DISTANCE - MISJUDGED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

2. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - HIDDEN OBSTRUCTION(S)

Occurrence #3: MAIN GEAR COLLAPSED

Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

3. LANDING GEAR,MAIN GEAR - SHEARED

Factual Information

On June 30, 2002, about 0930 Alaska daylight time, a tundra tire-equipped Cessna 185 airplane, N1078F, sustained substantial damage when the right main landing gear struck a log during landing at a remote airstrip, about 19 miles south of Skwentna, 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 commercial certificated pilot, and the two passengers, were not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed. The flight originated at the Lake Hood Strip, Anchorage, Alaska, at 0900.

During a telephone conversation with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigator-in-charge (IIC), on June 30, the pilot reported that he was landing at an airstrip next to the Talaheim Lodge, located along the Talachulitna River. The dirt surface airstrip is oriented north/south, and is about 1,200 feet long by 20 feet wide. The pilot said he was landing toward the north, and touched down about two feet short of the airstrip threshold. The right main landing gear struck a log stump that was concealed by bushes, just short of the threshold. The right main gear was torn off the airplane, and the right wing struck the ground. The airplane received damage to the right gear, fuselage, right wingtip, and the right elevator.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	56, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	April 15, 2002
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	May 8, 2001
Flight Time:	3321 hours (Total, all aircraft), 856 hours (Total, this make and model), 3230 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 29 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 11 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N1078F
Model/Series:	185	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	18502734
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	3
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	April 26, 2002 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3350 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	20 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	1846 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	CONTINENTAL
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	IO-520-D
Registered Owner:	RICHARD LATHROP TRUSTEE	Rated Power:	300 Horsepower
Operator:	RICHARD C. LATHROP	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:	Clear	Visibility	30 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	360°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	16°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	ANCHORAGE, AK (Z41)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	SKWENTNA, AK	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	09:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	TALAHEIM LODGE	Runway Surface Type:	Dirt
Airport Elevation:	700 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	36	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	1200 ft / 20 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Straight-in

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	2 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 None	Latitude, Longitude:	61.666667,-151.383331

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	ERICKSON, SCOTT
Additional Participating Persons:	JACK DEVLIN; FAA-AL-ANC FSDO 03; ANCHORAGE, AK
Original Publish Date:	April 1, 2003
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=55102

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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](#).