



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	ANCHORAGE, Alaska	Accident Number:	ANC02LA112
Date & Time:	September 1, 2002, 19:00 Local	Registration:	N6981B
Aircraft:	Piper PA-18	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The private certificated pilot was landing at a remote airstrip. The landing strip, oriented southeast/northwest, is about 600 feet long, by 15 feet wide, and is positioned on a ridge of a mountain. The pilot said he was landing toward the southeast, and touched down on the strip about 1/3 of its total distance beyond the landing threshold. He applied the airplane's brakes, but the tires began to slide on wet grass. The airplane departed off the end of the landing strip. The left main landing gear tire struck a hole about 300 feet past the end of the landing strip, and the left main landing gear was sheared off. The airplane received damage to the propeller, the left wing lift strut, and the left wing. The pilot reported that after the accident, he utilized a hand-held wind meter and discovered he had landed with about a 5 knot tailwind. The Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident/Incident Report (NTSB Form 6120.1) submitted by the pilot, contained an optional area for recommendations as to how the accident could have been prevented. The pilot indicated that his recommendation was, "Perform go-around instead of landing long."

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 on a remote airstrip, and his failure to perform a go-around that resulted in the airplane overrunning the end of the strip. Factors in

the accident were the pilot's inadequate evaluation of a tailwind condition, and a wet landing surface.

Findings

Occurrence #1: OVERRUN

Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

Findings

1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - TAILWIND
2. (F) WEATHER EVALUATION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) PROPER TOUCHDOWN POINT - NOT ATTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - WET
5. (C) GO-AROUND - NOT PERFORMED - PILOT IN COMMAND
6. LANDING GEAR,MAIN GEAR - OVERLOAD

Factual Information

On September 1, 2002, about 1900 Alaska daylight time, a tundra tire-equipped Piper PA-18 airplane, N6981B, sustained substantial damage when the airplane collided with a ditch during an overrun while landing at a remote airstrip, about 32 miles west of Anchorage, Alaska. The airplane was being operated as a Title 14, CFR Part 91 visual flight rules (VFR) cross-country personal flight when the accident occurred. The airplane was operated by the pilot. The private certificated pilot, and the sole passenger, were not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed. The flight originated at the Lake Hood Strip, Anchorage, about 1830.

During a telephone conversation with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigator-in-charge (IIC), on September 4, the pilot reported that he was landing near the top of Little Mount Susitna. The landing strip, oriented southeast/northwest, is about 600 feet long, by 15 feet wide, and is positioned on a ridge of the mountain. The pilot said he was landing toward the southeast, but touched down on the strip about 1/3 of its total distance beyond the landing threshold. He applied the airplane brakes, but the airplane tires began to slide on wet grass. The airplane departed off the end of the landing strip into an area of low bushes on a down sloping portion of the landing area. The left main landing gear tire struck a hole about 300 feet past the end of the landing strip. The airplane's left main landing gear was sheared off. The pilot reported that after the accident, he utilized a hand-held wind meter, and discovered about a five knot tailwind. The airplane received damage to the propeller and the left wing lift strut. Additionally, the outboard end of the left wing was bent upward about 20 degrees.

The Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident/Incident Report (NTSB Form 6120.1) submitted by the pilot, contained an optional area for recommendations as to how the accident could have been prevented. The pilot indicated that his recommendation was, "Perform go-around instead of landing long."

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	46,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-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	May 4, 2001
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	510 hours (Total, all aircraft), 390 hours (Total, this make and model), 510 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 61 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 37 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N6981B
Model/Series:	PA-18	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	18-5103
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	March 6, 2002 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1850 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	65 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	4387 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	O-320
Registered Owner:	MONTE TOWNSEND	Rated Power:	150 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:	Clear	Visibility	50 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	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:	13°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	ANCHORAGE, AK (Z41)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	ANCHORAGE, AK	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	18:30 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	Little Mt. Susitna	Runway Surface Type:	Grass/turf
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	Holes;Wet
Runway Used:	13	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	600 ft / 15 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Full stop

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:	61.45,-150.949996

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): ERICKSON, SCOTT

Additional Participating Persons: MICHAEL DOLSEN; FAA-AL-ANC FSDO 03; ANCHORAGE, AK

Original Publish Date: April 18, 2003

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=55631>

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](#).