



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	MANLEY HOT SPGS, Alaska	Accident Number:	ANC02LA117
Date & Time:	September 4, 2002, 14:13 Local	Registration:	N40449
Aircraft:	Piper PA-32R	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	3 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 135: Air taxi & commuter - Scheduled		

Analysis

The commercial certificated pilot was departing a remote airport on an air taxi flight. The pilot reported a flock of geese flew into the path of the airplane. The leading edge of the right wing was struck by one of the birds. The operator replaced a 23-inch-wide section of the right wing leading edge skin, a leading edge rib, and a section of wing top skin.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: A bird strike during takeoff, which resulted in substantial damage to the right wing.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings

1. (C) OBJECT - BIRD(S)

Factual Information

On September 4, 2002, about 1413 Alaska daylight time, a wheel-equipped Piper PA-32R airplane, N40449, sustained substantial damage when the right wing was struck by a bird during takeoff from Manley Hot Springs, Alaska. The airplane was being operated as a visual flight rules (VFR) scheduled passenger flight under Title 14, CFR Part 135, when the accident occurred. The airplane was operated as Flight 2218, by Tanana Air Service, Fairbanks, Alaska. The commercial certificated pilot, and the two passengers, were not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed. VFR company flight following procedures were in effect.

During a telephone conversation with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigator-in-charge (IIC), on September 5, the director of operations for the operator reported that as the airplane was taking off, a flock of geese flew into the path of the airplane. The leading edge of the right wing was struck by one of the birds. The operator replaced a 23-inch-wide section of the right wing leading edge skin, a leading edge rib, and a section of the wing top skin.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	50, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land	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 2 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	March 23, 2002
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	February 26, 2002
Flight Time:	2600 hours (Total, all aircraft), 2000 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N40449
Model/Series:	PA-32R	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	32R-7780519
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	5
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	August 27, 2002 Continuous airworthiness	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3600 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	20 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	7097 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	IO-540K1A5D
Registered Owner:	HAROLD ESMAILKA	Rated Power:	300 Horsepower
Operator:	BIDZY TA HOT AANA CORP.	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	Commuter air carrier (135), On-demand air taxi (135)
Operator Does Business As:	TANANA AIR SERVICE	Operator Designator Code:	BTHA

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	PAML, 270 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:	14:45 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 3000 ft AGL	Visibility	15 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 5000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29.69 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	18°C / 13°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	MANLEY HOT SPGS, AK (PAML)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	Company VFR
Destination:	FAIRBANKS, AK (PAFA)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	14:13 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	MANLEY HOT SPRINGS PAML	Runway Surface Type:	Gravel
Airport Elevation:	270 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	20	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	2875 ft / 30 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

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:	58.299236,-134.42041(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	ERICKSON, SCOTT
Additional Participating Persons:	MARK SMITH; FAA-AL-FAI FSDO 01; FAIRBANKS, AK
Original Publish Date:	April 18, 2003
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=55671

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](#).