



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	WHITTIER, Alaska	Accident Number:	ANC92FA141
Date & Time:	August 22, 1992, 18:55 Local	Registration:	N9829X
Aircraft:	CESSNA 185	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	4 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

PILOT FILED VFR FLIGHT PLAN FOR FLIGHT TO REMOTE STRIP EASTBOUND VIA WHITTIER/PORTAGE PASS. APPROX 6 MINUTES AFTER TAKEOFF AIRCRAFT IMPACTED AT 700 FT LEVEL OF PASS IN LEVEL FLIGHT. FSS BRIEFINGS DURING PRECEEDING 6 HRS INCLUDED ADVISORIES OF IMC WEATHER IN MOUNTAIN PASSES, W/PORTAGE PASS CLOSED. TRACK OF AIRCRAFT INDICATED AIRCRAFT WAS SKIRTING LEFT SIDE OF PASS. LEFT WINGTIP STRUCK VERTICAL WALL ON HEADING APPROX 60 DEGREES LEFT OF PASS CENTERLINE. WEATHER OBSERVED AS 200 FT OBSCURED AND 1 AND 1/2 MILE VISIBILITY, WITH RAIN AND FOG. WITNESSES 700 FT BELOW SITE HEARD BUT COULD NOT SEE IMPACT.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: PILOT IN COMMAND'S INTENTIONAL FLIGHT INTO KNOWN ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS. FACTORS RELATING TO THE ACCIDENT WERE: THE PILOT'S DISREGARD FOR ADVERSE WEATHER ADVISORY, WEATHER CONDITIONS (CLOUDS) AND MOUNTAINOUS TERRAIN.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER
Phase of Operation: CRUISE - NORMAL

Findings

1. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - MOUNTAINOUS/HILLY
2. (F) HAZARDOUS WEATHER ADVISORY - DISREGARDED - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - CLOUDS
4. (C) FLIGHT INTO KNOWN ADVERSE WEATHER - INTENTIONAL - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline transport; Commercial	Age:	34, 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:	
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	July 2, 1992
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	11000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1000 hours (Total, this make and model), 5000 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 180 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 60 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	CESSNA	Registration:	N9829X
Model/Series:	185 185	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	185-0029
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	January 2, 2000 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3350 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	CONTINENTAL
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-470-F
Registered Owner:	JAMES R. WIRTH	Rated Power:	260 Horsepower
Operator:	JAMES R. WIRTH	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument (IMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	5WT ,30 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	1 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	19:00 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	45°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown	Visibility	1 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	200 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	60°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	10°C / 10°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	N/A - None - Fog		
Departure Point:	GIRDWOOD , AK (AQY)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	VFR
Destination:	SOFTUK STRIP , AK	Type of Clearance:	VFR
Departure Time:	18:49 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:		Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	3 Fatal	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	4 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	60.849445,-148.030746(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Herlihy, Douglas
Additional Participating Persons:	SPENCER HILL; ANCHORAGE , AK
Original Publish Date:	June 30, 1993
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=5647

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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](#).