



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Cusick, Washington	Accident Number:	SEA04LA055
Date & Time:	March 14, 2004, 12:00 Local	Registration:	N65675
Aircraft:	Lake LA-4-200	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot was conducting a series of water landings on a river in a 10 knot crosswind that was occasionally gusting to near 15 knots. During the accident landing, he inadvertently let the aircraft touch down in a sideways drift, resulting in the left wing digging into the water, damaging the left wing sponson and the structure of the wing itself. Immediately after the accident, the pilot taxied to the shore of a small island in the river in order to avoid the possibility that the aircraft may sink if it was taking on water. During that taxi, the tip of the left wing remained under the water. A post-accident inspection of the aircraft by an FAA Inspector did not reveal any evidence of a flight control anomaly, and according to the pilot, there was no indication that there had been any functional problem with the aircraft.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to adequately compensate for crosswind conditions and his failure to maintain proper alignment in the direction of landing during the touchdown portion of a water landing on a river. Factors include crosswind conditions.

Findings

Occurrence #1: DRAGGED WING, ROTOR, POD, FLOAT OR TAIL/SKID
Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

1. (C) COMPENSATION FOR WIND CONDITIONS - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - CROSSWIND
3. PROPER ALIGNMENT - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

4. TERRAIN CONDITION - WATER

Factual Information

On March 14, 2004, approximately 1200 Pacific standard time, a Lake LA-4-200, N65675, collided with the water during a touch-and-go landing on the Pend Oreille River about two miles north of Cusick, Washington. The private pilot, who was the sole occupant, was not injured, but the aircraft, which is owned and operated by the pilot, sustained substantial damage. The 14 CFR Part 91 personal pleasure flight was being conducted in visual meteorological conditions. The pilot had made multiple touch-and-go landings on the river immediately prior to this accident, and this landing was supposed to be the next in that series of touch-and-goes.

According to the pilot/owner, he was conducting the series of water landings on the river in a 10 knot crosswind that was occasionally gusting to near 15 knots. During the subject landing, he inadvertently let the aircraft touch down in a sideways drift, resulting in the left wing digging into the water, and damage to the left wing sponson and the structure of the wing itself. Immediately after the accident, the pilot taxied to the shore of a small island in the river in order to avoid the possibility that the aircraft may sink if it was taking on water. During that taxi, the tip of the left wing remained under the water.

A post-accident inspection of the aircraft by an FAA Inspector from the Spokane Flight Standards District Office, did not reveal any evidence of a flight control anomaly, and according to the pilot, there was no indication that there had been any functional problem with the aircraft.

Although the pilot did not poses a seaplane rating, his logbook records indicated that he had received instruction in the accident aircraft, and that he had received a high-performance aircraft and complex aircraft endorsement in the aircraft on 6/14/2003. In addition, there was an entry in his logbook from a Certified Flight Instructor stating that he had received both a land and water "checkout" in the aircraft on 6/14/2003.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	53, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
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 Expired	Last FAA Medical Exam:	January 8, 2002
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	May 25, 2003
Flight Time:	157 hours (Total, all aircraft), 86 hours (Total, this make and model), 91 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 0 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 0 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 0 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Lake	Registration:	N65675
Model/Series:	LA-4-200	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	600
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - ; Amphibian	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	March 24, 2003 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2690 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	86 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	1959 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	IO-360-A1B
Registered Owner:	James G. Cool	Rated Power:	200 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	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	10 knots / 15 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	230°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	7°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Cusick, WA	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Cusick, WA	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	11:55 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

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:	48.510562,-117.370559(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Anderson, Orrin
Additional Participating Persons:	James P Black; FAA/FSDO; Spokane, WA
Original Publish Date:	June 30, 2004
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=58944

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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](#).