



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	Stanley, Idaho	<b>Accident Number:</b>	SEA04FA190
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	September 13, 2004, 19:45 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N20GV
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Cessna U206F	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Positioning		

## Analysis

The flight of two aircraft departed a private airstrip in an area of mountainous terrain. While en route to their destination, the flight encountered low clouds and fog. The pilot of the accident aircraft radioed to the other pilot that the clouds were "pretty low" in the valley that he was attempting to go through. The other pilot asked the accident pilot if he could turn around. The accident pilot stated that he was too low, followed by that there was fog clear to the ground. Shortly thereafter, communications with the accident pilot were lost. The wreckage was found in an area of mountainous terrain. The wreckage was positioned in an approximate 30 degrees nose down attitude to the terrain with the aft end of the fuselage raised off the ground. The empennage section was folded over to the left side. No evidence of a mechanical failure or malfunction was noted during the post accident examination of the wreckage.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's inadequate in-flight planning/decision which resulted in VFR flight into IMC, and his failure to maintain aircraft control.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER  
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

Findings

1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - FOG
2. (C) IN-FLIGHT PLANNING/DECISION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - CLOUDS
4. (C) VFR FLIGHT INTO IMC - CONTINUED - PILOT IN COMMAND

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

Findings

5. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - HIGH TERRAIN
6. (C) AIRCRAFT CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

## Factual Information

### HISTORY OF FLIGHT

On September 13, 2004, about 1945 mountain daylight time, a Cessna U206F, N20GV, registered to and operated by Stanley Air Taxi, as a 14 CFR Part 91 positioning flight, collided with mountainous terrain while maneuvering about 17 nautical miles northwest of Stanley, Idaho. Instrument meteorological conditions prevailed at the accident site and no flight plan was filed. The aircraft was substantially damaged and the commercial pilot, the sole occupant, was fatally injured. The flight departed from Pistol Creek, a private mountain airstrip, as a flight of two aircraft about 1925.

During an interview and subsequent written statement, the pilot of the other aircraft reported that this was a flight of two aircraft that were returning to Stanley after dropping off freight at Pistol Creek. The pilot of the other aircraft reported that the accident pilot was in the lead and radioed after passing Dagger Falls that he wanted to go around to Bear Valley and take a look instead of using the Middle Fork. The accident pilot tried to go through Bear Valley but rejected it due to the weather. The second pilot also tried it but had to reject it too due to weather. The second pilot tried it again 300 feet lower, but rejected it a second time. The second pilot then radioed that he was going back to Dagger Falls to check out the Middle Fork. If it didn't look good he would land at Sulphur Creek. As the second pilot headed north for Dagger Falls, he stated that the accident pilot was off to his left over Ayers Meadows and thought that he would follow. When the second pilot got to the river, he radioed the accident pilot that he was slowing down. The accident pilot responded "I'm at the river, starting up Marsh Crk. It's pretty low in here." The second pilot called back asking if the accident pilot could turn around. The accident pilot responded, "No" followed by "There's fog clear to the ground." There were no further transmissions from the accident pilot. The second pilot continued to Marsh Creek, but encountered "very poor visibility" less than a mile into the valley. The pilot turned around and landed at Sulphur Creek Ranch, a private airstrip, without further incident. (See attached topographic chart for location points described in statement)

An emergency locator signal was picked-up on September 13, 2004, at 2056, and a search of the area was initiated. The wreckage was located on September 14, 2004, at 2030.

### PERSONNEL INFORMATION

At the time of the accident the pilot held a commercial certificate for single-engine land and sea aircraft with an instrument rating. The pilot's flight logbook was not made available for review, however, a representative of Stanley Air Taxi reported that the pilot had accumulated a total flight time of about 15,000 hours.

The pilot held a Class II, Federal Aviation Administration issued medical certificate dated June 15, 2004. A limitation to wear corrective lenses was noted.

A 14 CFR Part 135 flight check was accomplished and passed on July 16, 2004, in a Cessna 206.

#### METEOROLOGICAL INFORMATION

At 1951, Stanley Ranger Station (SNT), automated observation, located 17 nautical miles southeast of the accident site reported calm winds and an altimeter setting of 29.94" Hg. Temperature was 7 degrees C, and dewpoint was 2 degrees C. Cloud conditions are not reported.

The other pilot reported during an interview, that the flight encountered low clouds and fog along their route.

#### WRECKAGE AND IMPACT INFORMATION

The accident site is located at about the 8,700 foot level on the western face of Cape Horn Mountain at 44 degrees 24.35 North latitude, 115 degrees 15.14 West longitude. The summit of Cape Horn is 9,526 feet. The wreckage was positioned in an approximate 30 degrees nose down attitude on approximate 30 degree sloping rocky terrain. The aft end of the fuselage was raised off the ground, with the empennage section bent over to the left side. Trees were located on the uphill side of the wreckage. No evidence of tree impact was noted. No evidence of ground scarring or disturbance was noted around the wreckage.

Both wings remained in place and attached to the fuselage. All flight control surfaces remained attached to their respective hinges.

Minimal damage was noted to the empennage and associated control surfaces. All fixed and movable control surfaces remained attached to their respective positions and the control cables were present and connected at the aft attach points.

The engine remained attached to the firewall. All three propeller blades remained in the propeller hub, but were free to move. All three blades displayed severe leading and trailing edge gouging and chordwise scratches.

The wreckage was removed from the accident site intact via a helicopter long line lift and transported to Bruce Meadows Airstrip. Once on the ground at Bruce Meadows, investigators from the National Transportation Safety Board, Cessna Aircraft Company, and the Federal Aviation Administration completed the wreckage documentation.

Control continuity was established throughout the system.

The left wing displayed a leading edge aft crushing to the outboard nine feet of the wing. The aft crushing increased on a 45 degree angle to the tip. The lift strut remained attached at the wing and was torn away at the fuselage attachment point.

The right wing displayed impact damage to the wingtip area. The lift strut remained attached at the wing and fuselage points. Access to the flap motor verified that the flaps had been extended approximately 10 degrees.

Propeller blade "A" was loose in the hub and displayed aft bending. Severe leading edge gouging and chordwise striations were noted to the blade back. The blade tip was torn off.

Propeller blade "B" had separated from the hub and displayed severe leading and trailing edge gouging with chordwise striations.

Propeller blade "C" was straight and displayed leading edge gouging. The tip was torn off.

The front end of the Teledyne Continental engine IO-520-F, displayed impact damage and the propeller spinner was crushed aft. Cylinder Number six head was cracked on the left side.

The nose gear was folded aft and the main landing gear remained attached at their respective positions.

#### MEDICAL AND PATHOLOGICAL INFORMATION

An autopsy was performed on the pilot by Glen R. Groben, M.D., Valley County Coroner's Office, McCall, Idaho. The pilot's cause of death was reported as: "Blunt force trauma due to an aircraft accident."

Toxicological samples were sent to the Federal Aviation Administration, Civil Aeromedical Institute, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, for analysis. The results of the analysis were reported as negative.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The wreckage was recovered from the accident site on September 16, 2004, by personnel from Discount Salvage, Deer Park, Washington.

The wreckage was released to the owner's representative on September 22, 2004.

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	62, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	Yes
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 2 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	June 15, 2004
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	Yes	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	July 16, 2004
<b>Flight Time:</b>	15000 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Cessna	<b>Registration:</b>	N20GV
<b>Model/Series:</b>	U206F	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	U20602260
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Tricycle	<b>Seats:</b>	6
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	July 28, 2004 100 hour	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	3600 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	90.7 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	7861 Hrs at time of accident	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Continental
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed, not activated	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	IO-520-F
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	Stanley Air Taxi	<b>Rated Power:</b>	300 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>		<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	On-demand air taxi (135)

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Instrument (IMC)	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	SNT,6403 ft msl	<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	17 Nautical Miles
<b>Observation Time:</b>	19:51 Local	<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	115°
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>		<b>Visibility</b>	
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>		<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	/	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>		<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	29.94 inches Hg	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	7°C / 2°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	N/A - None - Fog		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	Pistol Creek, ID	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>	Stanley, ID (2U7 )	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	19:25 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class G

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>		<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	44.409721,-115.25389

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Eckrote, Debra
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	Michael Misnick; FAA/FSDO; Boise, ID Henry Soderlund; Cessna Aircraft Company; Wichita, KS
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	February 24, 2005
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class</a>
<b>Note:</b>	The NTSB traveled to the scene of this accident.
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=60129">https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=60129</a>

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](#).