



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Lodi, California	Accident Number:	LAX08CA188
Date & Time:	June 19, 2008, 06:40 Local	Registration:	N3859E
Aircraft:	Piper PA-36-375	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)	Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 137: Agricultural		

Analysis

The pilot was flying low over a grape vineyard to apply sulfur dust to the crop. He had made two application runs with no problems encountered. As he set up for the third run, he observed that the sulfur applied on the previous two runs had aggregated into a cloud and had drifted through the area in which he would be flying. He decided to continue the application run, and lost all visual contact with the ground as the airplane flew into the sulfur dust cloud. The left wing hit a grape trellis, which pulled the airplane down and to the left. The airplane traveled 150 yards on top of the grape trellises before stopping inverted on the ground. The pilot reported no mechanical failures or malfunctions with the airplane during the flight.

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 decision to continue the flight into an area of obscured visibility and his failure to maintain clearance above obstacles.

Findings

Environmental issues	Fence/fence post - Not specified
Aircraft	Altitude - Not attained/maintained
Environmental issues	Obscuration - Decision related to condition
Personnel issues	Decision making/judgment - Pilot

Factual Information

History of Flight

Maneuvering-low-alt flying	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT) (Defining event)
Maneuvering-low-alt flying	VFR encounter with IMC

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline transport	Age:	63, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):		Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2	Last FAA Medical Exam:	September 1, 2007
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	May 1, 2008
Flight Time:	22000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 5700 hours (Total, this make and model), 57 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N3859E
Model/Series:	PA-36-375	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Restricted (Special)	Serial Number:	36-7802028
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	April 1, 2008 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	9651 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	IO-720
Registered Owner:	Jack Roberts/Gene Hamner	Rated Power:	
Operator:	H AND R AERIAL ENTERPRISES INC	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	
Operator Does Business As:	San Joaquin Air	Operator Designator Code:	HORG

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Dawn
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:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Lodi, CA (O20)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	06:30 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	Kingdon Airpark O20	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:		IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	38.088333,-121.355552

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Cornejo, Tealeye
Additional Participating Persons:	David T Jensen; Federal Aviation Administration; Oakland, CA
Original Publish Date:	July 30, 2008
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=68272

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