



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	LONOKE, Arkansas	Accident Number:	FTW82DA037
Date & Time:	January 5, 1982, 09:49 Local	Registration:	N5304P
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-24-250	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Serious, 1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation		

Analysis

THE PILOT STATED THAT THE ENGINE FAILED AT 2000 FT AS HE WAS DESCENDING FOR AN APPROACH. HE SWITCHED THE FUEL SELECTOR FROM THE RIGHT TANK TO THE LEFT TANK, TURNED ON THE BOOST PUMP, AND PUMPED THE THROTTLE BUT THE ENGINE FAILED TO START. THE AIRCRAFT LANDED IN A SOD AREA NEXT TO AN INTERSTATE HIGHWAY. THE RIGHT FUEL TANK WAS FOUND EMPTY WHILE THE LEFT CONTAINED APPROXIMATELY 15 GALS OF FUEL. THE PILOT STATED HE OBSERVED FUEL RUNNING OUT OF THE RIGHT TANK ONTO THE PAVEMENT. THE FAA INSPECTORS COULD FIND NO FUEL STAINS ON THE AIRCRAFT OR ROADWAY AND NO EVIDENCE OF A FUEL LEAK. THE ENGINE WAS RUN DURING THE INVESTIGATION AND NO DISCREPANCIES WERE FOUND.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(TOTAL) - NONMECHANICAL
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - NORMAL

Findings

1. (C) FLUID,FUEL - STARVATION
2. (C) FUEL TANK SELECTOR POSITION - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING
Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Occurrence #3: ON GROUND/WATER ENCOUNTER WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

Findings

3. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - SOFT

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	46, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):		Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	December 16, 1981
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	10000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 522 hours (Total, this make and model), 10000 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 20 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N5304P
Model/Series:	PA-24-250 PA-24-250	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:		Serial Number:	24345
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2800 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	0 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed	Engine Model/Series:	O-540-A1AS
Registered Owner:	DONALD L. HICKS	Rated Power:	250 Horsepower
Operator:	DONALD L. HICKS	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	LIT	Distance from Accident Site:	20 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	09:50 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	360°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 10000 ft AGL	Visibility	
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 25000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	10 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	200°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	46°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	MEMPHIS , TN (LIT)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	LITTLE ROCK , AR (MEM)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	09:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:		Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	0 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	
Runway Length/Width:	0 ft / 0 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Straight-in

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Serious, 1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	34.779422,-91.889472(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):

Additional Participating Persons:

Original Publish Date: January 5, 1983

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=71479>

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](#).