



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	MACON, Georgia	Accident Number:	ATL82DA088
Date & Time:	March 29, 1982, 12:25 Local	Registration:	N9LT
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-24-250	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE NON-INSTRUMENT RATED PILOT REPORTED DEPARTING FT LAUDERDALE, FL WITH 4 HRS OF FUEL ON BOARD ON A 40 MINUTE FLIGHT TO OKEECHOBEE, FL. THE NEXT DAY, HE DEPARTED OKEECHOBEE WITHOUT REFUELING ON A FLIGHT TO MACON, GA. HE REPORTED THAT HE HAD TO CLIMB TO 10,500 FT TO AVOID CLOUDS AND MAINTAIN VFR. WHILE EN ROUTE, HE FOUND HIMSELF OVER A CLOUD LAYER. WITH 40 HOURS OF INSTRUMENT EXPERIENCE, HE ELECTED TO DESCEND AND LAND AT MACON. THE PILOT WAS VECTORED AND CLEARED FOR AN ILS APPROACH. APPROACH CONTROL NOTED THAT THE PILOT DID NOT DESCEND BELOW 1600 FT AS HE APPROACHED AND OVERFLEW THE AIRPORT. THE AIRPORT ELEVATION WAS 354 FT. HE INITIATED A MISSED APPROACH, AND SHORTLY THEREAFTER, REPORTED THAT HE HAD RUN OUT OF FUEL. HE WAS VECTORED BACK TOWARD THE AIRPORT, BUT WAS UNABLE TO REACH THE RUNWAY. ABOUT THREE HOURS AND 5 MINUTES AFTER TAKEOFF THE PLANE STRUCK WIRES AS THE PILOT WAS LANDING IN A WHEAT FIELD. AFTER HITTING THE WIRES, HE WAS ABLE TO MAINTAIN CONTROL UNTIL AFTER TOUCHDOWN.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER

Phase of Operation: CRUISE - NORMAL

Findings

1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - CLOUDS
2. (F) IN-FLIGHT PLANNING/DECISION - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(TOTAL) - NONMECHANICAL

Phase of Operation: MISSED APPROACH (IFR)

Findings

3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - LOW CEILING
4. (F) IFR PROCEDURE - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND
5. (F) DECISION HEIGHT - NOT ATTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
6. MISSED APPROACH - INITIATED - PILOT IN COMMAND
7. (C) FLUID,FUEL - EXHAUSTION
8. (C) PREFLIGHT PLANNING/PREPARATION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
9. (C) FUEL CONSUMPTION CALCULATIONS - INACCURATE - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #3: FORCED LANDING

Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - FINAL APPROACH

Occurrence #4: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT

Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - FINAL APPROACH

Findings

10. (F) OBJECT - WIRE,STATIC

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	45, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):		Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	August 21, 1980
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	435 hours (Total, all aircraft), 344 hours (Total, this make and model), 297 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 20 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N9LT
Model/Series:	PA-24-250 PA-24-250	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:		Serial Number:	24 3203
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2900 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	165 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3056 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed	Engine Model/Series:	O-540-A1D5
Registered Owner:	LARRY E. THAYER	Rated Power:	250 Horsepower
Operator:	LARRY E. THAYER	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	
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:	MCN	Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:	12:29 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown	Visibility	7 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 900 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	11 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	40°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	47°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	OKEECHOBEE , FL (OBE)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	DEATH VALLEY , CA (L69)	Type of Clearance:	
Departure Time:	09:20 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	LEWIS B. WILSON MCN	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	0 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	ILS
Runway Length/Width:	0 ft / 0 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 None	Latitude, Longitude:	32.79951,-83.620719(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):

Additional Participating Persons:

Original Publish Date: March 29, 1983

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=71525>

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](#).