



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	POLLY CREEK, Alaska	Accident Number:	ANC82DA071
Date & Time:	August 12, 1982, 18:20 Local	Registration:	N2701M
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-12	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	3 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE PILOT LANDED ON THE BEACH NEAR THE MOUTH OF POLLY CREEK TO GO FISHING. AFTER FISHING FOR SEVERAL HOURS. HE NOTICED FUEL LEAKING FROM THE FILLER CAP ON THE LEFT MAIN TANK. THIS OCCURRED WHEN FUEL CROSS-FLOWED FROM THE RIGHT AUXILIARY TANK. THE PILOT TURNED OFF THE LEFT MAIN AND RIGHT AUXILIARY FUEL TANKS TO STOP THE CROSS FEED. AFTER SEVERAL MORE HOURS, THE TIDE BEGAN COMING IN AND THE PILOT HURRIED HIS PREFLIGHT TO GET OFF THE BEACH DURING TAKEOFF, THE ENGINE COUGHED AT LIFT-OFF, PROMOTING THE PILOT TO ABORT. THE AIRCRAFT BOUNCED 2 OR 3 TIMES ON THE BEACH WHICH WAS UNEVEN, THEN THE LEFT MAIN GEAR ENTERED THE SURF. SUBSEQUENTLY, THE PLANE VEERED AND NOSED OVER IN DEEPER WATER. THE PILOT STATED THAT HE HAD PLANNED TO TAKEOFF USING THE FULL LEFT TANK. AFTER THE ACCIDENT, HE FOUND THE RIGHT FUEL SELECTOR WAS ON, BUT THE LEFT MAIN TANK WAS ONLY PARTIALLY ON. HE BELIEVED THIS CAUSED THE ENGINE TO SPUTTER FROM FUEL STARVATION. BEFORE RECOVERY, THE PLANE WAS FURTHER DAMAGED BY THE SURF.

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(PARTIAL) - NONMECHANICAL
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings

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

Occurrence #2: LOSS OF CONTROL - ON GROUND/WATER
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF

Findings

4. ABORTED TAKEOFF - PERFORMED - PILOT IN COMMAND
5. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - ROUGH/UNEVEN
6. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - LOOSE GRAVEL/SANDY
7. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - WET
8. DIRECTIONAL CONTROL - NOT POSSIBLE - PILOT IN COMMAND
9. GROUND LOOP/SWERVE - UNCONTROLLED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #3: ON GROUND/WATER ENCOUNTER WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF

Findings

10. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - WATER,ROUGH

Occurrence #4: NOSE OVER
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	30, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):		Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Invalid Medical for flight	Last FAA Medical Exam:	June 26, 1980
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	169 hours (Total, all aircraft), 66 hours (Total, this make and model), 127 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 9 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N2701M
Model/Series:	PA-12 PA-12	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:		Serial Number:	12-1205
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	3
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1750 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	66 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	1958 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed	Engine Model/Series:	O-235-C
Registered Owner:	GARY S. LIEPITZ	Rated Power:	100 Horsepower
Operator:	GARY S. LIEPITZ	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:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	50 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Unknown	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	4 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	225°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	65°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	POLLY CREEK , AK	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	VFR
Destination:	(LHD)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	18:20 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	(UNIMPROVED BEACH)	Runway Surface Type:	Gravel
Airport Elevation:	0 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Wet
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	10000 ft / 25 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	2 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 None	Latitude, Longitude:	60.069068,-151.420989(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):

Additional Participating Persons:

Original Publish Date: August 12, 1983

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=72276>

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