



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Chugiak, Alaska	Accident Number:	ANC10CA042
Date & Time:	May 22, 2010, 11:30 Local	Registration:	N2581M
Aircraft:	Piper PA-12	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Collision during takeoff/land	Injuries:	3 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The private pilot was landing at a remote airstrip surrounded by trees at the completion of a Title 14, CFR Part 91 personal flight. The pilot stated that during the approach, just before touchdown, he allowed the airplane to drift left of his intended approach path, and the left main landing gear wheel struck a tree, which yawed the airplane to the left. During touchdown, the right main landing gear collapsed, followed by the collapse of the left main landing gear. The airplane sustained substantial damage to the wings, fuselage and empennage. The pilot stated that there were no preaccident mechanical problems with the airplane.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to maintain a proper glide path while landing, which resulted in an in-flight collision with a tree, and the collapse of the main landing gear during touchdown.

Findings

Environmental issues	Tree(s) - Contributed to outcome
Aircraft	Descent/approach/glide path - Not attained/maintained

Factual Information

History of Flight

Approach-VFR pattern final	Collision during takeoff/land (Defining event)
Landing-flare/touchdown	Landing gear collapse

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	62, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	July 14, 2008
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	2100 hours (Total, all aircraft), 8 hours (Total, this make and model), 2000 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 10 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 6 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N2581M
Model/Series:	PA-12	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	12-1049
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	3
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	May 20, 2010 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	
Time Since Last Inspection:	2 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	2407 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	C91 installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-320 SERIES
Registered Owner:	PAGE SPENCER	Rated Power:	150 Horsepower
Operator:	RICHARD N. SUTLIFF	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	PAAQ,242 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	15 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	12:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	10°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 5500 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	7 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	180°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.04 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	9°C / 1°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Anchorage, AK (MRI)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Chugiak, AK (A13)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	11:10 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	Bold Airport A13	Runway Surface Type:	Gravel
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	32	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	1000 ft / 15 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Full stop

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:	61.336666,-148.986663(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Johnson, Clinton
Additional Participating Persons:	Steve Fortenberry; Federal Aviation Administration (Operations); Anchorage, AK
Original Publish Date:	October 21, 2010
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=76107

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](#).