



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Kenai, Alaska	Accident Number:	ANC11LA068
Date & Time:	July 24, 2011, 18:00 Local	Registration:	N9852X
Aircraft:	Cessna 185	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Loss of engine power (partial)	Injuries:	4 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot reported he was on an over-water leg of a cross-country flight, when the engine went to low idle rpm. Unable to restore sufficient power to remain airborne, he landed the float-equipped airplane in large ocean swells, sustaining substantial damage to the fuselage. The airplane landed hard, and the floats separated from the airplane. The airplane sank, and was not recovered. It is unknown what precipitated the loss of engine power.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The loss of engine power for an undetermined reason, resulting in the ditching and sinking of the airplane in ocean waters.

Findings

Not determined	(general) - Unknown/Not determined
Aircraft	(general) - Inoperative

Factual Information

History of Flight

Enroute-cruise	Loss of engine power (partial) (Defining event)
Emergency descent	Ditching
Emergency descent	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

On July 24, 2011, about 1800 Alaska daylight time, a float-equipped Cessna 185 airplane, N9852X, sustained substantial damage to the fuselage during a hard landing in ocean swells, about 22 miles southwest of Kenai, Alaska. The airplane was operated by the pilot as a visual flight rules (VFR) personal cross-country flight, under the provisions of 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 91, when the accident occurred. The pilot and the three passengers were not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and no flight plan was filed. The flight departed Bear Lake, Alaska about 1630, bound for Kenai.

During a telephone interview with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigator-in-charge (IIC) on July 24, the pilot said while in cruise flight about 3000 feet above the waters of the Cook Inlet, the airplane's engine went to idle. He said he attempted to restore power, but was not successful, and he attempted a landing in Cook Inlet. The pilot said there were 6 foot high swells, and the airplane bounced off the first swell, and dove into the next. He said the floats tore loose from the fuselage, and the airplane impacted the water. The occupants of the airplane were wearing personal flotation devices, and exited the airplane.

The pilot said after being rescued, only the tail of the airplane remained above the water, about 5 miles from shore. No efforts were made to save the airplane, and the wreckage has not been recovered. He said prior to the accident, there were no known mechanical problems with the airplane.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	48, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	June 28, 2011
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	February 19, 2010
Flight Time:	598 hours (Total, all aircraft), 431 hours (Total, this make and model), 598 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 49 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 16 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N9852X
Model/Series:	185	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	185-0052
Landing Gear Type:	Amphibian	Seats:	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	March 9, 2011 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3350 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3478 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	CONT MOTOR
ELT:	C91A installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	IO-470 SERIES
Registered Owner:	JOHANNES SCOTT	Rated Power:	260 Horsepower
Operator:	JOHANNES SCOTT	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

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:		Visibility	30 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 5000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	20 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Bear Lake, AK	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Kenai, AK (PAEN)	Type of Clearance:	Unknown
Departure Time:	16:30 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	3 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	4 None	Latitude, Longitude:	60.586666,-151.646667

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Lewis, Lawrence
Additional Participating Persons:	Michael Costillos; FAA FSDO-03; Anchorage, AK
Original Publish Date:	October 20, 2011
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=81206

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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](#).