



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	BESSEMER, Alabama	Accident Number:	ATL91FA040
Date & Time:	January 19, 1991, 18:15 Local	Registration:	N4827W
Aircraft:	Rockwell 114	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	4 Fatal, 1 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE FLIGHT WAS CLEARED FOR THE RUNWAY FIVE APPROACH. CURRENT WEATHER HAD BEEN ISSUED WHICH INCLUDED THE ALTIMETER SETTING FOR BIRMINGHAM. NO MECHANICAL PROBLEM HAD BEEN REPORTED AND THE FLIGHT APPEARED NORMAL. THE LAST RADAR HIT INDICATED THAT THE FLIGHT WAS AT 1300 FEET EARLY IN THE APPROACH. SUBSEQUENTLY, THE AIRCRAFT CRASHED ABOUT FOUR MILES SOUTHWEST OF THE AIRPORT. IMPACT OCCURRED WITH THE TOPS OF TREES THAT WERE IN A VALLEY ABOUT 200 FEET BELOW THE AIRPORT ELEVATION. WRECKAGE WAS SCATTERED OVER A 350 FOOT AREA AND DIAGONAL SLASH MARKS WERE FOUND ON TREE LIMBS THROUGHOUT THE AREA. THE AIRPORT ELEVATION WAS 699 FEET. MINIMUM DESCENT ALTITUDE (MDA) FOR THE APPROACH WAS 1260 FEET. NO PREIMPACT PART FAILURE OR MALFUNCTION OF THE AIRCRAFT WAS FOUND.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: FAILURE OF THE PILOT TO FOLLOW INSTRUMENT FLIGHT RULES (IFR) AND MAINTAIN THE MINIMUM DESCENT ALTITUDE (MDA) DURING THE VOR APPROACH. FACTORS RELATED TO THE ACCIDENT WERE: DARKNESS AND THE ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: APPROACH - FAF/OUTER MARKER TO THRESHOLD (IFR)

Findings

1. (F) LIGHT CONDITION - NIGHT
2. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - LOW CEILING
3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - FOG
4. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - DRIZZLE/MIST
5. (C) IFR PROCEDURE - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND
6. OBJECT - TREE(S)
7. (C) MINIMUM DESCENT ALTITUDE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	36, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):		Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	August 13, 1990
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	3600 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Rockwell	Registration:	N4827W
Model/Series:	114 114	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:		Serial Number:	14157
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3140 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	0 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, activated	Engine Model/Series:	IO-540-T4B5D
Registered Owner:		Rated Power:	260 Horsepower
Operator:	FRANK, RANDAL W.	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument (IMC)	Condition of Light:	Night/bright
Observation Facility, Elevation:	2A3 ,699 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	1 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	18:42 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	45°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown	Visibility	2 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	200 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	0°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	8°C / 7°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	N/A - None - Fog		
Departure Point:	STARKVILLE , MS (STF)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Destination:	BESSEMER , AL (2A3)	Type of Clearance:	IFR
Departure Time:	17:30 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	BESSEMER 114	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	699 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Wet
Runway Used:	5	IFR Approach:	VOR
Runway Length/Width:	5700 ft / 100 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	3 Fatal, 1 Serious	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	4 Fatal, 1 Serious	Latitude, Longitude:	33.369831,-86.96054(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Powell, Phillip

Additional Participating Persons:

Original Publish Date: June 30, 1992

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=8305>

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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](#).