



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	ENGELHARD, North Carolina	Accident Number:	ATL92FA020
Date & Time:	November 7, 1991, 21:00 Local	Registration:	N7120P
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-24	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation		

Analysis

THE NON INSTRUMENT RATED PILOT WAS RETURNING TO HIS HOME AIRPORT FOLLOWING A BUSINESS TRIP. NIGHT, VMC EXISTED, WITH AN OVERCAST CEILING AT 7,000 FEET. THE DEPARTURE RUNWAY HEADING WAS DIRECTLY TOWARD THE PAMLICO SOUND IN EASTERN N.C. THE WRECKAGE WAS FOUND 1/4 MILE NORTH OF THE DEPARTURE END OF RUNWAY 11. THE AIRPLANE IMPACTED TREES AND TERRAIN IN A SHALLOW DESCENT AND CAME TO REST INVERTED. THE INVESTIGATION REVEALED NO EVIDENCE OF MECHANICAL PROBLEMS OR LOSS OF AIRCRAFT CONTROL PRIOR TO IMPACT. IT WAS NOTED THAT THERE WERE A LACK OF NIGHT VISUAL REFERENCES IN THE SPARSELY POPULATED AREA. THIS, COUPLED WITH DARKNESS AND AN OVERCAST CEILING, RESULTED IN CONDITIONS CONDUCIVE TO SPATIAL DISORIENTATION.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: THE SPATIAL DISORIENTATION EXPERIENCED BY THE PILOT, AND HIS INADVERTENT DESCENT INTO THE TERRAIN. A FACTOR WAS THE DARK, NIGHT LIGHTING CONDITION AT THE TIME OF THE ACCIDENT.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings

1. OBJECT - TREE(S)
2. (F) LIGHT CONDITION - DARK NIGHT
3. (C) DESCENT - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (C) SPATIAL DISORIENTATION - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	50, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical-w/ waivers/lim	Last FAA Medical Exam:	April 27, 1990
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	700 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N7120P
Model/Series:	PA-24 PA-24	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	24-2279
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	January 2, 2000 Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2550 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	O-360-A1A
Registered Owner:	KOGER, BOBBY B.	Rated Power:	180 Horsepower
Operator:	KOGER, BOBBY B.	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Night/dark
Observation Facility, Elevation:	EWN ,19 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	61 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	20:45 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	250°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 7000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	4 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	30°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	14°C / 8°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	KNIGHTDALE , NC (W17)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	21:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	HYDE COUNTY 7W6	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	8 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	11	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	4700 ft / 100 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	35.540737,-76.02021 (est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Hicks, Ralph

Additional Participating Persons: LARRY LAMBERT; MORRISVILLE , NC
MARY BALLARD; MORRISVILLE , NC

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Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note:

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=8487>

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