



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	DOVESVILLE, South Carolina	Accident Number:	ATL92FA152
Date & Time:	August 3, 1992, 10:00 Local	Registration:	N8620P
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-24-400	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

WHILE CRUISING AT 7500 FEET MSL THE PILOT REPORTED A GRADUAL LOSS OF ENGINE POWER. THE PILOT ESTABLISHED RADIO AND RADAR CONTACT WITH FLORENCE APPROACH CONTROL AND ADVISED THE CONTROLLER OF HIS ENGINE PROBLEM. THE PILOT WAS GIVEN RADAR VECTORS TO DARLINGTON COUNTY AIRPORT, THE NEAREST SUITABLE AIRPORT. ANOTHER PILOT FLYING IN THE SECOND AIRPLANE IN THE FLIGHT SUGGESTED SEVERAL REMEDIES FOR THE LOSS OF ENGINE POWER. FINALLY, HE SUGGESTED THAT THE PILOT CHECK THE MAGNETOS. THE PILOT REPORTED THAT THE ENGINE RAN SMOOTHLY ON ONE MAGNETO BUT THE ENGINE ALMOST QUIT WHEN SWITCHED TO THE OTHER MAGNETO. MOMENTS LATER THE PILOT REPORTED A COMPLETE LOSS OF ENGINE POWER. THE AIRPLANE DISAPPEARED OFF THE RADAR SCOPE AND CRASHED 3 MILES SHORT OF DARLINGTON COUNTY AIRPORT. THE SECOND AIRPLANE LANDED WITHOUT INCIDENT BUT THE PILOT REPORTED A LAYER OF FOG AT THE AIRPORT. THE AIRPLANE WAS DESTROYED BY IMPACT FORCES AND THE POST CRASH FIRE.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: THE LOSS OF ENGINE POWER WHICH RESULTED FROM AN UNDETERMINED MALFUNCTION OF THE IGNITION SYSTEM. A FACTOR WAS FOG.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(TOTAL) - MECH FAILURE/MALF
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings

1. (C) IGNITION SYSTEM,MAGNETO - INOPERATIVE
2. (C) IGNITION SYSTEM,MAGNETO - UNDETERMINED

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - EMERGENCY

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - EMERGENCY

Findings

3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - FOG

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	41, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; None	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	May 8, 1992
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	400 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N8620P
Model/Series:	PA-24-400 PA-24-400	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Utility	Serial Number:	24-144
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	May 4, 1992 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3600 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	I0-720
Registered Owner:	BURKE COAL COMPANY	Rated Power:	400 Horsepower
Operator:	BURKE COAL COMPANY	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:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	FLO ,147 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	30 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	08:56 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	130°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	4 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 9500 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	7 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	170°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	24°C / 22°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	N/A - None - Haze		
Departure Point:	WISE , VA (LNP)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	VFR
Destination:	N.MYRTLE BEACH , SC (CRE)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	08:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	DARLINGTON COUNTY AIRPORT 04J	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	990 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	23	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	5000 ft / 75 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Precautionary landing;Straight-in

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	On-ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	34.380916,-79.850608(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Powell, Phillip
Additional Participating Persons:	THOMAS DAMOUR; COLUMBIA , SC
Original Publish Date:	September 14, 1993
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=8515

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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](#).