



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	ELIZABETHTON, Tennessee	Accident Number:	ATL93LA072
Date & Time:	April 15, 1993, 09:00 Local	Registration:	N878D
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-23-250	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

ACCORDING TO THE PILOT, ABOUT TWENTY MINUTES INTO THE FLIGHT, THE LEFT ENGINE BEGAN TO RUN ROUGH. THE ENGINE ALSO DEVELOPED AN UNUSUAL SMELL AND THE CYLINDER HEAD TEMP WAS HIGH. AFTER EVALUATING THE SITUATION, THE PILOT SHUT DOWN THE LEFT ENGINE, CHANGED HIS DESTINATION AIRPORT AND ELECTED TO CONTINUE THE FLIGHT TO A MORE SUITABLE AIRPORT FOR AN EMERGENCY LANDING. AS THE FLIGHT CONTINUED, ALTITUDE BECAME MORE DIFFICULT TO MAINTAIN. THE AIRPLANE CRASHED SHORT OF THE AIRPORT AND BURST INTO FLAMES; THE PILOT ESCAPED FROM THE WRECKAGE BEFORE THE AIRPLANE WAS COMPLETELY ENGULFED. EXAMINATION OF THE WRECKAGE FAILED TO DISCLOSE A MECHANICAL PROBLEM, BECAUSE THE ENTIRE AIRFRAME WAS CONSUMED BY FIRE.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: A LOSS OF ENGINE POWER ON ONE ENGINE FOR UNDETERMINED REASONS.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings
1. 1 ENGINE

2. (C) REASON FOR OCCURRENCE UNDETERMINED

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - EMERGENCY

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - EMERGENCY

Findings

3. OBJECT - TREE(S)

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	47, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
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 2 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	March 27, 1993
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	2304 hours (Total, all aircraft), 792 hours (Total, this make and model), 2176 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 37 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 30 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N878D
Model/Series:	PA-23-250 PA-23-250	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	27-7754099
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	January 31, 1993 100 hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	5200 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	49 Hrs	Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	2684 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	IO-540 C485
Registered Owner:	MORRISTOWN FLYING SERVICE	Rated Power:	250 Horsepower
Operator:	MORRISTOWN FLYING SERVICE	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:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	OA9 ,1584 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	1 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	09:00 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	360°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 3000 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 14000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	4 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	140°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	21°C / 11°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	MORRISTOWN , TN (MOR)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	JOHNSON CITY , TN (OA4)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	09:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	ELIZABETHON MUNICIPAL 0A9	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	1550 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	6	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	4000 ft / 75 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Traffic pattern

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	On-ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Powell, Phillip
Additional Participating Persons:	JAMES PERKINS; NASHVILLE , TN
Original Publish Date:	November 3, 1993
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=8735

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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](#).