



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

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<b>Location:</b>	Talkeetna, Alaska	<b>Accident Number:</b>	ANC13CA060
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	June 30, 2013, 21:00 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N3885M
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Piper PA-12	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>	Miscellaneous/other	<b>Injuries:</b>	2 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

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## Analysis

The pilot stated that he was en route to a remote cabin site, and he made a wrong turn into a box canyon. As he flew farther into the canyon, he had to initiate a climb to avoid rising terrain ahead, and the airplane subsequently climbed into an area of light rain, fog, and reduced visibility. He said that as he was attempting to turn the airplane around, the left wing impacted terrain, and the airplane sustained substantial damage to the left wing, fuselage, and empennage. The pilot reported no preaccident mechanical malfunctions or failures with the airplane that would have precluded normal operation.

The airplane was equipped with a required emergency locator transmitter (ELT), however, it was an older generation ELT that transmitted only on 121.5 megahertz, not the newer, digital version that transmits on 406 megahertz.

As of February 2009, the search and rescue satellites that receive ELT signals no longer had the capability to receive the older analog 121.5 megahertz ELTs. The 406 megahertz ELTs are received within seconds of activation, and rescuers are notified within minutes of the accident location.

In this accident, the pilot and passenger were missing for approximately 24 hours before searchers were able to locate the wreckage.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's loss of situational awareness, which resulted in a wrong turn into a box canyon, and an in flight collision with terrain.

### Findings

<b>Personnel issues</b>	Identification/recognition - Pilot
<b>Environmental issues</b>	Mountainous/hilly terrain - Contributed to outcome

## Factual Information

### History of Flight

<b>Enroute-cruise</b>	Miscellaneous/other (Defining event)
<b>Maneuvering</b>	Controlled flight into terr/obj (CFIT)

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Private	<b>Age:</b>	67, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Front
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 3 Without waivers/limitations	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	February 17, 2012
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	No	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	December 5, 2011
<b>Flight Time:</b>	5200 hours (Total, all aircraft), 300 hours (Total, this make and model), 25 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 15 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Piper	<b>Registration:</b>	N3885M
<b>Model/Series:</b>	PA-12	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	12-2582
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Tailwheel	<b>Seats:</b>	3
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	June 24, 2012 Annual	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	50 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	2833 Hrs as of last inspection	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	LYCOMING
<b>ELT:</b>	C91 installed, activated, aided in locating accident	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	O-360 SERIES
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	On file	<b>Rated Power:</b>	180 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>	On file	<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Instrument (IMC)	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Dusk
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	PATK	<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	37 Nautical Miles
<b>Observation Time:</b>	20:53 Local	<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	90°
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Clear	<b>Visibility</b>	10 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	Broken / 300 ft AGL	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	/	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>		<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	29.87 inches Hg	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	12°C / 12°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	Light - None - Rain		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	Talkeetna, AK	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>	Talkeetna, AK	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	20:00 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	2 None	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	62.277221,-148.796386(est)

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Shaver, Christopher
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	FAA Anchorage FSDO; Anchorage, AK
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	August 13, 2013
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class</a>
<b>Note:</b>	This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=87355">https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=87355</a>

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant events in other modes of transportation—railroad, transit, highway, marine, pipeline, and commercial space. We determine the probable causes of the accidents and events we investigate, and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future occurrences. In addition, we conduct transportation safety research studies and offer information and other assistance to family members and survivors for each accident or event we investigate. We also serve as the appellate authority for enforcement actions involving aviation and mariner certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and US Coast Guard, and we adjudicate appeals of civil penalty actions taken by the FAA.

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](#).