



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Los Angeles, California	Accident Number:	WPR17LA217
Date & Time:	September 26, 2017, 16:38 Local	Registration:	N9020P
Aircraft:	Piper PA-24-260	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Landing gear not configured	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot was concluding a personal flight. He stated that he lowered the landing gear while preparing to land and felt the airplane's drag increase; however, he could not remember if he got confirmation that the landing gear were down and locked from the indicator light in the cockpit. He stated that the landing flare was normal but that as the airplane continued the landing roll, all three landing gear collapsed. The airplane sustained structural damage to the fuselage.

Postaccident examination of the airplane revealed that all the landing gear were in the gear wells. The main landing gear doors were not damaged and only the nose landing gear door had light scratches, which is likely due to the landing gear being in the retracted position as the airplane touched down on the runway. A landing gear swing was accomplished, and no mechanical malfunctions or failures were revealed that would have precluded normal operation.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

The pilot's failure to extend the landing gear before landing.

Findings

Personnel issues	Forgotten action/omission - Pilot
Aircraft	(general) - Not used/operated

Factual Information

History of Flight

Landing-landing roll	Landing gear not configured (Defining event)
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On September 26, 2017, at 1638 Pacific daylight time, a Piper PA-24-260 airplane, N9020P, sustained substantial damage during landing at Whiteman Airport, Los Angeles, California. The private pilot was not injured. The airplane was registered to and operated by the pilot as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 personal flight. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the accident and no flight plan had been filed for the flight which departed from Camarillo, California about 1600.

The pilot reported that he lowered the landing gear while preparing to land on runway 12. He stated that after lowering the gear, he felt the airplane's drag increase but could not remember if he got a confirmation they were down and locked from the indicator light. He further stated the landing flare was normal and the airplane touched down on the main landing gear. Thereafter, the nose gear settled toward the runway and as the airplane continued on the landing roll, all three gear collapsed. The airplane incurred structural damage to the fuselage.

A Federal Aviation Administration certified mechanic examined the airplane after the accident. He stated that all three landing gear were in the gear wells. The main landing gear doors were not damaged and only the nose landing gear door had light scratches, which he thought was consistent with the landing gear being retracted at the time of impact. After recovering the airplane, the mechanic swung the landing gear and performed an examination. He found no mechanical malfunctions or failures that would have prevented normal operation.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	70, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Glider	Restraint Used:	3-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	April 20, 2016
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	664 hours (Total, all aircraft), 56 hours (Total, this make and model), 467 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 6 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N9020P
Model/Series:	PA-24-260	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1966	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	4482
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	May 10, 2017 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3201 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	2702 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	TIO-540-O4A5
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	310 Horsepower
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KWHP,1003 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	23:38 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	148°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	7 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	None / None
Wind Direction:	110°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	N/A / Light
Altimeter Setting:	29.8 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	29°C / 1°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	CAMARILLO, CA (CMA)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Los Angeles, CA (WHP)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	16:00 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	Whiteman Airport WHP	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	1003 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	12	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	4120 ft / 75 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Traffic pattern

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	34.259445,-118.41333(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Keliher, Zoe
Additional Participating Persons:	Darrin Richards; Federal Aviation Administration; Van Nuys, CA
Original Publish Date:	May 28, 2020
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=96180

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](#).