



AVIATION



HIGHWAY



MARINE



RAILROAD



PIPELINE

Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Bethel, Alaska	Accident Number:	DCA18CA056
Date & Time:	December 23, 2017, 21:21 UTC	Registration:	N935CE
Aircraft:	McDonnell Douglas DC 9 33F	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Sys/Comp malf/fail (non-power)	Injuries:	3 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 121: Air carrier - Non-scheduled		

Analysis

On December 23, 2017 at 1221 Alaska Standard Time (AkST) a Boeing/McDonnell-Douglas DC-9, registration N935CE, experienced a depressurization on initial climb from the Bethel, Alaska, airport (PABE.) The flight crew returned to Bethel and landed with no further incident. There were no injuries to the two flight crew and one cargo handler on board. The depressurization resulted from a pallet jack in the cargo compartment impacting the rear pressure bulkhead, resulting in substantial damage to the airplane. Inspection revealed a tie-down fastener for the pallet jack had pulled out.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: failure of a cargo tie-down fastener, resulting in unsecured cargo striking the pressure bulkhead.

Findings

Aircraft	Seat/cargo attach fitting - Failure
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Factual Information

History of Flight

Initial climb	Sys/Comp malf/fail (non-power) (Defining event)
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Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline transport; Commercial	Age:	51
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	5-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	November 13, 2017
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	August 15, 2017
Flight Time:	8000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 2000 hours (Total, this make and model), 3000 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 180 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 80 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Co-pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline transport; Commercial; Flight instructor	Age:	31
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):		Restraint Used:	5-point
Instrument Rating(s):		Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane multi-engine; Airplane single-engine; Instrument airplane	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	November 14, 2017
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	June 6, 2017
Flight Time:	5250 hours (Total, all aircraft), 450 hours (Total, this make and model), 3400 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 170 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 50 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	McDonnell Douglas	Registration:	N935CE
Model/Series:	DC 9 33F 33F	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1969	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Transport	Serial Number:	47413
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	5
Date/Type of Last Inspection:		Certified Max Gross Wt.:	114001 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	
ELT:	C126 installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	Tatonduk Outfitters Limited	Rated Power:	
Operator:	Everts Air	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	Supplemental

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	PABE	Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 5000 ft AGL	Visibility	
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 12000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	15 knots / 23 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	90°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29.57 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	4°C / -2°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Bethel, AK (PABE)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Destination:	Anchorage, AK (PANC)	Type of Clearance:	IFR
Departure Time:	11:50 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class C

Airport Information

Airport:	Bethel PABE	Runway Surface Type:	Concrete
Airport Elevation:	126 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Snow
Runway Used:	19R	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	6400 ft / 150 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	3 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 None	Latitude, Longitude:	60.809642,-161.84996(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): English, William

Additional Participating Persons:

Original Publish Date: August 23, 2019

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class](#)

Note: This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=96537>

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](#).