



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	PALMAS DEL MAR, PR	Accident Number:	MIA94LA170
Date & Time:	07/01/1994, 1800 AST	Registration:	N4287L
Aircraft:	FULLANA QUICKSILVER GT-500	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Fatal, 1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE PILOT OF THE EXPERIMENTAL HOMEBUILT AIRPLANE WAS OBSERVED MANEUVERING ALONG THE SHORELINE AT ABOUT 20 FT ABOVE THE WATER. THE SURVIVING PASSENGER STATED THE PILOT WAS LOWERING THE FLAPS TO SLOW THE AIRPLANE TO POINT OUT AN APARTMENT. AS THE PILOT QUICKLY LOWERED THE FLAPS THE AIRPLANE PITCHED DOWN, HIT THE WATER, AND SANK.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: THE PILOT'S ABRUPT LOWERING OF THE FLAPS WHICH RESULTED IN A LOSS OF CONTROL AT AN ALTITUDE INSUFFICIENT FOR RECOVERY, AND THE PILOT'S UNWARRANTED LOW FLYING.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

Findings

1. (C) LOW ALTITUDE FLIGHT/MANEUVER - INTENTIONAL - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (C) LOWERING OF FLAPS - ABRUPT - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Factual Information

On July 1, 1994, about 1800, Atlantic standard time, N4287L, a homebuilt, Quicksilver GT-500, registered to the pilot Eduardo Castellanos, crashed in the water adjacent to Palmas Del Mar, Puerto Rico, while on a 14 CFR Part 91 flight. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time and no flight plan was filed for the local flight. The recreational certificated pilot received fatal injuries, the passenger received minor injuries, and the airplane was destroyed. The flight had originated from a local airport about 15 minutes earlier.

Witnesses and the passenger stated that the pilot was flying about 20 feet above the water along the beach and was attempting to point out an apartment to the passenger. The pilot stated he would slow the airplane down and he added flaps. The passenger observed the nose pitch down and the airplane collided with the water and sank. The passenger stated he released his shoulder harness and seatbelt and swam to the surface for air. He attempted to dive to release the pilot twice but could not do so. The passenger was then assisted to the shore by surfers in the area.

Examination of the airplane, engine, and controls by the FAA inspector revealed no evidence of preimpact failures.

Pilot Information

Certificate:		Age:	45, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	10/29/1992
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	208 hours (Total, all aircraft), 15 hours (Total, this make and model), 14 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	FULLANA	Registration:	N4287L
Model/Series:	QUICKSILVER GT-500 QUICKSILVE	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental	Serial Number:	942
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	04/14/1994, AAIP	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	942 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	ROTAX
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	R-582
Registered Owner:	CASTELLANOS, EDUARDO	Rated Power:	65 hp
Operator:	CASTELLANOS, EDUARDO	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	TJS, 8 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	41 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1750 AST	Direction from Accident Site:	325°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 2000 ft agl	Visibility	11 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 30000 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	13 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	70°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	29° C / 21° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1745 AST	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): ANDREW A ALSTON **Report Date:** 04/27/1995

Additional Participating Persons: MEL MARENGO; SAN JUAN, PR

Publish Date:

Investigation Docket: NTSB accident and incident dockets serve as permanent archival information for the NTSB's investigations. Dockets released prior to June 1, 2009 are publicly available from the NTSB's Record Management Division at pubinq@ntsb.gov, or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at <http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/>.

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The Independent Safety Board Act, as codified at 49 U.S.C. Section 1154(b), precludes the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an incident or accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report. A factual report that may be admissible under 49 U.S.C. § 1154(b) is available [here](#).