



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	NOME, AK	Accident Number:	ANC96LA027
Date & Time:	03/02/1996, 1330 AST	Registration:	N8374T
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-32-301	Injuries:	1 Minor, 1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter - Scheduled		

Analysis

The pilot and passenger departed a remote airstrip on a commuter flight in marginal VFR conditions. The pilot reported that he was crossing low hills about 1,000 feet AGL and encountered turbulence and a possible loss of engine power. The engine did not run rough but the airplane continued to descend until impact. The airplane struck a snow covered hill about 15 miles west of the destination airport. The passenger reported that the majority of the flight was conducted with limited downward visibility. Just prior to impact, the passenger reported white-out conditions, and no terrain was visible. The airplane received damage to the landing gear, fuselage, and wings. The pilot and passenger were rescued about 4 hours after the accident. The destination airport reported weather conditions that included a 1,300 feet overcast sky and a visibility of 10 miles in light snow. The operator reported no engine malfunction.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the pilot's continued VFR flight into instrument meteorological conditions and his failure to maintain adequate altitude/clearance from terrain. Low ceilings and snow covered terrain were factors in the accident.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings

1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - LOW CEILING
2. (C) VFR FLIGHT INTO IMC - CONTINUED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings

3. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - SNOW COVERED
4. (C) ALTITUDE/CLEARANCE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	29
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:	1572 hours (Total, all aircraft), 15 hours (Total, this make and model), 253 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N8374T
Model/Series:	PA-32-301 PA-32-301	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Operator:	GRANT AVIATION INC.	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
Operating Certificate(s) Held:	Commuter Air Carrier (135)	Engine Model/Series:	IO-540-K1GS
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter - Scheduled		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	OME, 37 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Weather Observation Facility
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 1300 ft agl	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	12 knots / , 120°
Temperature:	0°C	Visibility	10 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	TELLER, AK (AK54)	Destination:	, AK (OME)

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	SCOTT R ERICKSON	Adopted Date:	05/09/1996
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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