



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	MOUNTAIN HOME, AR	Accident Number:	FTW96LA199
Date & Time:	05/01/1996, 1300 CDT	Registration:	N9869K
Aircraft:	Piper PA-28	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot stated 'Upon takeoff, the engine died. I believe from fuel starvation.' The airplane was substantially damaged during the emergency landing to a rocky ravine. The pilot reported that he did not visually check the airplane's fuel quantity during his preflight inspection.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the pilot's failure to visually check the fuel quantity during the preflight inspection. A factor was the unsuitable terrain for the forced landing.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings

1. (C) FLUID,FUEL - EXHAUSTION
2. (C) AIRCRAFT PREFLIGHT - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING AFTER TAKEOFF

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING AFTER TAKEOFF

Findings

3. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - NONE SUITABLE
4. TERRAIN CONDITION - ROCK(S)/BOULDER(S)

Factual Information

On May 1, 1996, at 1300 central daylight time, a Piper PA-28, N9869K, registered to and operated by a private owner as a Title 14 CFR Part 91 personal flight, was substantially damaged during a forced landing following a loss of engine power during takeoff. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and a flight plan was not filed. The private pilot and his passenger received minor injuries. The flight originated from a private airstrip near Mountain Home, Arkansas.

Shortly after takeoff, at approximately 100 feet AGL, the engine lost power. During the emergency landing to a rocky ravine, the fuselage and both wings were damaged. Both fuel tanks were compromised.

The pilot reported that during his preflight inspection, he did not visually check the fuel quantity. The airplane had been fueled 5 days earlier, and approximately 2 to 3 hours had been flown since then. The pilot also reported that the accident "possibl[y] could have been prevented by a more thorough preflight." He further reported that he did not know, at the time of departure, what the total fuel on board was. The pilot stated that "upon takeoff, the engine died. I believe from fuel starvation."

Inspection of the airplane by the pilot revealed that the fuel sump valve was missing. The pilot reported that "the interior threads inside the AN fitting were all intact." However, the attached photograph shows thread damage.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	53, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	12/20/1942
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	2128 hours (Total, all aircraft), 40 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N9869K
Model/Series:	PA-28 PA-28	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	28-7816199
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	01/20/1996, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2325 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	44 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	5015 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	O-320D3G
Registered Owner:	PAUL H. WEDIN	Rated Power:	160 hp
Operator:	PAUL H. WEDIN	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	, 0 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	0000	Direction from Accident Site:	0°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear / 0 ft agl	Visibility	10 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None / 0 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	Light and Variable /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	21 °C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	(6AR4)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	(BPK)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	0000	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): ALEXANDER LEMISHKO **Report Date:** 11/25/1996

Additional Participating Persons: MERLE D LIPPOTT; LITTLE ROCK, AR

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](#).