



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	BITTINGER, MD	Accident Number:	IAD97FA038
Date & Time:	01/01/1997, 1308 EST	Registration:	N8925S
Aircraft:	Cessna 150F	Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The noninstrument-rated pilot departed on a cross-country flight after receiving a briefing that VFR flight was not recommended. No flight plan was filed, and a family member stated that the pilot had made this flight numerous times. Witnesses reported, 'a very low overcast (100 feet), fog, and drizzle, which changed to freezing drizzle and rain within one hour of the accident.' Witnesses stated that they 'heard the airplane circling, but did not see the airplane impact' due to obscuring low clouds. Impact occurred in a pasture in a nose down attitude. Examination of the wreckage revealed no preimpact malfunction.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: VFR flight by the noninstrumented-rated pilot into instrument meteorological conditions (IMC), which lead to spatial disorientation of the pilot, his loss of aircraft control, and an uncontrolled collision with the terrain. Factors relating to the accident were: the adverse weather conditions, and the pilot's lack of instrument experience.

Findings

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

Findings

1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - LOW CEILING
2. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - FOG
3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - DRIZZLE/MIST
4. (C) VFR FLIGHT INTO IMC - PERFORMED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings

5. (C) AIRCRAFT CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
6. (C) SPATIAL DISORIENTATION - PILOT IN COMMAND
7. (F) LACK OF TOTAL INSTRUMENT TIME - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	36
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	None
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:	450 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N8925S
Model/Series:	150F 150F	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Operator:	WILLIAM PAWLIKOWSKI	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None	Engine Model/Series:	O-200-A
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	, 0 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Witness
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 100 ft agl	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	/ ,
Temperature:		Visibility	0 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	CONNELLSVILLE, PA (2W3)	Destination:	WARRENTON, VA (W66)

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	JIM CAIN	Adopted Date:	10/30/1998
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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