



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

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|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| Location: | NOATAK, AK | Accident Number: | ANC97TA045 |
| Date & Time: | 04/01/1997, 1145 AST | Registration: | N4500W |
| Aircraft: | Piper PA-18 | Injuries: | 1 None |
| Flight Conducted Under: | Part 91: General Aviation - | | |

Analysis

The pilot, an employee of the National Park Service, related he was returning to his position as a Park Ranger/Pilot after a three month furlough from the park service. The purpose of the accident flight was to regain proficiency in the Piper PA-18 airplane. The pilot said that during the landing roll on the fourth landing, he lost directional control of the airplane, and it ground looped to the left, which resulted in substantial damage to the airframe. Also, the pilot said he did not fly during his furlough, and that his total flight experience in the PA-18 airplane was approximately five hours.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: failure of the pilot to maintain directional control of the airplane, which resulted in an inadvertent ground loop and damage to the airplane. Factors associated with the accident were: the ice/snow covered runway, and the pilot's lack of experience in the make and model of airplane.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - ON GROUND/WATER
Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

Findings

1. (F) AIRPORT FACILITIES,RUNWAY/LANDING AREA CONDITION - SNOW COVERED
2. (F) AIRPORT FACILITIES,RUNWAY/LANDING AREA CONDITION - ICY
3. (C) DIRECTIONAL CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (C) GROUND LOOP/SWERVE - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND
5. (F) LACK OF TOTAL EXPERIENCE IN TYPE OF AIRCRAFT - PILOT IN COMMAND

Pilot Information

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|----------------------------------|--|------------------------------|----------|
| Certificate: | Airline Transport | Age: | 36 |
| Airplane Rating(s): | Multi-engine Land; Multi-engine Sea; Single-engine Land; Single-engine Sea | Instrument Rating(s): | Airplane |
| Other Aircraft Rating(s): | None | Instructor Rating(s): | None |
| Flight Time: | 6413 hours (Total, all aircraft), 5 hours (Total, this make and model), 5792 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 7 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 7 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft) | | |

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

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|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| Aircraft Make: | Piper | Registration: | N4500W |
| Model/Series: | PA-18 PA-18 | Engines: | 1 Reciprocating |
| Operator: | NATIONAL PARK SERVICE | Engine Manufacturer: | Lycoming |
| Operating Certificate(s) Held: | None | Engine Model/Series: | O-320-B2B |
| Flight Conducted Under: | Part 91: General Aviation - | | |

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

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|---|--------------------|-------------------------------------|----------|
| Conditions at Accident Site: | Visual Conditions | Condition of Light: | Day |
| Observation Facility, Elevation: | , 0 ft msl | Weather Information Source: | Pilot |
| Lowest Ceiling: | None / 0 ft agl | Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction: | Calm / , |
| Temperature: | -26 °C | Visibility | 10 Miles |
| Precipitation and Obscuration: | | | |
| Departure Point: | KOTZEBUE, AK (OTZ) | Destination: | (WTK) |

Airport Information

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|-----------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Airport: | NOATAK (WTK) | Runway Surface Type: | Gravel |
| Runway Used: | 36 | Runway Surface Condition: | Ice; Snow--compacted |
| Runway Length/Width: | 4000 ft / 60 ft | | |

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

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|--------------------------------------|---|----------------------|------------|
| Investigator In Charge (IIC): | JAMES D LABELLE | Adopted Date: | 07/13/1998 |
| Investigation Docket: | NTSB accident and incident docket 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/ . | | |

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), established in 1967, is an independent federal agency mandated by Congress through the Independent Safety Board Act of 1974 to investigate transportation accidents, determine the probable causes of the accidents, issue safety recommendations, study transportation safety issues, and evaluate the safety effectiveness of government agencies involved in transportation. The NTSB makes public its actions and decisions through accident reports, safety studies, special investigation reports, safety recommendations, and statistical reviews.

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