



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

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|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Location: | ST. PAUL, MN | Accident Number: | CHI97FA200 |
| Date & Time: | 07/02/1997, 0720 CDT | Registration: | N83353 |
| Aircraft: | Piper PA-32R-301 | Injuries: | 3 Fatal, 1 Serious, 1 Minor |
| Flight Conducted Under: | Part 91: General Aviation - Business | | |

Analysis

Shortly after takeoff in gusty winds, the forward baggage door opened. The pilot attempted to return to the airport when the airplane impacted trees and descended into the river. The passengers stated the airplane was at a low altitude, the wings were rocking left and right, and a buzzer was sounding just before the accident. One passenger stated to his knowledge the baggage door was latched, but not locked prior to takeoff. Inspection of the baggage door latch after the accident showed it was in the latched position. No failure of the latch was noted which would have resulted in it opening during the flight. The takeoff was performed on runway 16 and the winds were from 210 degrees at 13 knots, gusting to 21 knots.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to maintain adequate airspeed which resulted in a stall. Related factors were the pilot's diverted attention and gusty wind conditions.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings

1. (F) DOOR,CARGO/BAGGAGE - NOT SECURED
 2. (F) DOOR,CARGO/BAGGAGE - OPEN
 3. (F) DIVERTED ATTENTION - PILOT IN COMMAND
 4. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - GUSTS
 5. (C) AIRSPEED - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
 6. (C) STALL/MUSH - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND
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Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Findings

7. OBJECT - TREE(S)
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Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Findings

8. TERRAIN CONDITION - WATER

Pilot Information

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|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Certificate: | Flight Instructor; Commercial | Age: | 53 |
| Airplane Rating(s): | Single-engine Land | Instrument Rating(s): | Airplane |
| Other Aircraft Rating(s): | None | Instructor Rating(s): | Airplane Single-engine; Instrument Airplane |
| Flight Time: | 1950 hours (Total, all aircraft) | | |

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

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|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| Aircraft Make: | Piper | Registration: | N83353 |
| Model/Series: | PA-32R-301 PA-32R-301 | Engines: | 1 Reciprocating |
| Operator: | CORPORATE AVIATION, INC. | Engine Manufacturer: | Lycoming |
| Operating Certificate(s) Held: | None | Engine Model/Series: | IO-540 |
| Flight Conducted Under: | Part 91: General Aviation - Business | | |

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

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|---|----------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Conditions at Accident Site: | Visual Conditions | Condition of Light: | Day |
| Observation Facility, Elevation: | SGS, 820 ft msl | Weather Information Source: | Weather Observation Facility |
| Lowest Ceiling: | Broken / 3000 ft agl | Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction: | 13 knots / 21 knots, 210° |
| Temperature: | 16° C | Visibility | 10 Miles |
| Precipitation and Obscuration: | | | |
| Departure Point: | (SGS) | Destination: | FORT DODGE, IA (FOD) |

Airport Information

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|-----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Airport: | SOUTH ST. PAUL-FLEMING (SGS) | Runway Surface Type: | |
| Runway Used: | 0 | Runway Surface Condition: | |
| Runway Length/Width: | | | |

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): WESLEY M ROBBINS Adopted Date: 09/28/1999

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.