



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

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<b>Location:</b>	JUNEAU, AK	<b>Accident Number:</b>	ANC97LA114
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	08/01/1997, 2200 AKD	<b>Registration:</b>	N3491C
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Cessna 170B	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	1 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

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## Analysis

The pilot was departing from an 800-foot-long beach site at dusk. During lift-off at less than flying speed the airplane dragged a wingtip and subsequently settled into the water.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's selection of an unsuitable off-airport site for takeoff, and his premature lift-off.

## Findings

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

### Findings

1. (C) UNSUITABLE TERRAIN OR TAKEOFF/LANDING/TAXI AREA - SELECTED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. LIGHT CONDITION - DUSK
3. (C) LIFT-OFF - PREMATURE - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER  
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

### Findings

4. TERRAIN CONDITION - WATER

## Factual Information

On August 1, 1997, about 2200 Alaska daylight time, a Cessna 170B tail wheel equipped airplane, N3491C, sustained substantial damage when it impacted water during an attempted takeoff from a beach on Seymour Canal, about 22 miles southeast of Juneau, Alaska, at position 58-00.0 north latitude, 134-20.0 west longitude. The private certificated pilot was uninjured. The flight was conducted under 14 CFR Part 91 in visual meteorological conditions as a personal flight. Lighting conditions were evening twilight.

The pilot stated to the NTSB investigator that he began his takeoff from hard, wet sand with an estimated 800 feet of takeoff length available. When he saw the water become visible in the landing light, he applied flaps to become airborne, but did not have sufficient airspeed to fly. The airplane's right wing contacted the water, and the airplane came to rest approximately 200 feet from the shoreline, in approximately three feet of water. The pilot waded to shore, and was picked up by a passing aircraft about 1000 on August 2, 1997.

The pilot stated that he weighs 180 pounds, and that there was 90 pounds of fuel on board. The passenger seats had all been removed, and there was a thirty pound pack and a ten pound rifle on board.

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Private	<b>Age:</b>	31, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine Land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 3 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	09/13/1996
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>		<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	60 hours (Total, this make and model)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N3491C
Model/Series:	170B 170B	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	26534
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	06/10/1997, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2000 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	20 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3383 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-300A
Registered Owner:	JOHN L. DEMUTH	Rated Power:	145 hp
Operator:	JOHN L. DEMUTH	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Dusk
Observation Facility, Elevation:	, 0 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	0000	Direction from Accident Site:	0°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown / 0 ft agl	Visibility	3 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 8000 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	330°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	10° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	, AK (JNU)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	2200 ADT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

## Wreckage and Impact Information

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

## Administrative Information

**Investigator In Charge (IIC):** MATTHEW L THOMAS **Report Date:** 11/10/1998

**Additional Participating Persons:** KIERAN K O'FARRELL; JUNEAU, AK

**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](mailto: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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