



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

<b>Location:</b>	LANGLEY AFB, VA	<b>Accident Number:</b>	IAD98FA032
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	03/01/1998, 0936 EST	<b>Registration:</b>	N62082
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Cessna 172P	<b>Injuries:</b>	2 Fatal
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

## Analysis

The two pilots filed a local VFR flight plan and departed the 10,000 feet long runway to the east. According to United States Air Force weather observers, a cloud layer at 300 feet with fog was approaching the airport from the northeast at the same time the airplane departed. Shortly after takeoff, the airplane transmitted to the tower, '...we're going to come back for landing...uh...the ceiling is lower than we thought.' The tower controller acknowledged the call and instructed the airplane to report when it reached the base leg of the traffic pattern. The tower controller observed the airplane enter a climbing left turn and disappear into the approaching cloud layer. He said, 'It was nice and clear in all quadrants with a little overcast/light fog to the east.' Witnesses in proximity to the crash site reported they heard the airplane but could not see it until it descended vertically out of the low cloud cover. The airplane collided with terrain and a building in the vicinity of the downwind leg of the traffic pattern. Examination of the wreckage revealed no pre-impact anomalies. The pilot in the left seat did not possess an instrument rating.

## Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's inadvertent VFR flight into IMC conditions, and the subsequent loss of aircraft control due to spatial disorientation. A factor in the accident was the low ceiling.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER  
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

### Findings

1. (C) VFR FLIGHT INTO IMC - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. SPATIAL DISORIENTATION - PILOT IN COMMAND

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Occurrence #2: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT  
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

### Findings

3. WEATHER CONDITION - LOW CEILING
4. (C) AIRCRAFT CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
5. (C) SPATIAL DISORIENTATION - PILOT IN COMMAND

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

## Findings

### 6. TERRAIN CONDITION - GROUND

#### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Private	<b>Age:</b>	49
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine Land	<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None
<b>Flight Time:</b>	146 hours (Total, all aircraft), 39 hours (Total, this make and model), 50 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

#### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Cessna	<b>Registration:</b>	N62082
<b>Model/Series:</b>	172P 172P	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Operator:</b>	LANGLEY AERO CLUB	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Lycoming
<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	O-320-D2
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

#### Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Instrument Conditions	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	LFI, 11 ft msl	<b>Weather Information Source:</b>	Weather Observation Facility
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	Overcast / 300 ft agl	<b>Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:</b>	8 knots / , 60°
<b>Temperature:</b>	10° C	<b>Visibility</b>	4 Miles
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>			
<b>Departure Point:</b>	(LFI)	<b>Destination:</b>	

#### Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>	LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE (LFI)	<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	Concrete
<b>Runway Used:</b>	8	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	Dry
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>	10000 ft / 150 ft		

#### Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	2 Fatal	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>			

## Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): BRIAN C RAYNER Adopted Date: 08/27/1999

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](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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