



National Transportation Safety Board

Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	BAINBRIDGE, GA	Accident Number:	MIA98LA115
Date & Time:	04/02/1998, 0800 EST	Registration:	N6847Z
Aircraft:	Piper PA-25-235	Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Instructional		

Analysis

According to the certified flight instructor (CFI), witness, the pilot was being trained in agricultural operations, and was in radio communications with the CFI who was supervising the operation. The witnesses said the airplane made a turn at the end of a field, appeared to stall, impacted the ground and burned. The airplane was last seen about 150 to 200 feet above the ground in a turn. The flight had departed with full fuel and 100 gallons of water. The CFI was to observe from the ground, the pilot fly a Piper Pawnee aircraft into a local farmers field, while he practiced simulated spray runs, aerial applicator maneuvers, back and forth across the field. According to the CFI, he had a two-way hand-held radio, and '...we each acknowledged a good radio check.' The CFI said he then told the pilot he should takeoff and fly to the field, and the CFI drove his truck to the field to observe his progress. As the CFI approached the edge of the field he said, the pilot was making his first pass into the field from east to west on the south side of the field, '...he looked steady and at a safe height of about 15-20 feet. He exited to the west end of the field correctly and turned 45 degrees to the left at an altitude of about 150-200 feet above the trees and extended in a southwesterly direction for about 4-5 seconds before initiating a right hand reversal back into the field. While his aircraft was in a right, medium-banked [sic] (30 degrees) level turn, I diverted my attention momentarily from the aircraft to park my truck. After only about 5 seconds, I looked back into the direction where I had last seen the plane, and observed a plume black smoke coming from behind the trees, rising up about 100 feet from ground level.' According to the FAA Inspector's statement, the on site investigation revealed that the hopper was intact and empty of water. The dump handle was found in the dump position. The leakage of water on the ground near the crash site. The elevator trim was found in the nose down position. The elevator, rudder, and aileron continuity was established. The seat belt was found in locked position [attached], on the ground, inside the cockpit, and the body of the pilot showed no evidence of the seat belt or harness being attached. The cockpit frame work, inertial reel gear shift, and shoulder harness attachment cable, were sent to the NTSB Materials Laboratory, Washington, DC, for examination. The examination revealed that the inertial reel retraction cable failed due to wearing of the cable, over an undetermined period of time, after which the remaining wires of the cables failed in tensile overstress. There was no evidence found to show that the cable was tied to the frame tube before or at the of the accident. Nor could it be confirmed that the marks on the frame tube were caused by the shoulder harness attachment cable. Three nearly equally spaced marks on the tube was suggestive of a series of ties, and not an individual tie for holding the separated cable to the framework. The pilot had first soloed the Pawnee, on April 1, 1998, and had logged 3.2 hours in preparation for the subject flight. There were no records found showing that the pilot had received any additional training in this make/model or category of airplane. In addition, the owner/operator of the airplane, and the provider of the training for this type of operation were the same. The training was conducted under the name of AG-FLIGHT Inc. There is nothing in their circular that says a person applying for training needs any special certificate, a minimum of flight time or special experience. The training program was not certified by the FAA, and it is not required to be certified. The pilot had a total of 165 hours of flight time, and a total of 3.3 hours in this make and model

airplane at the time of the accident.

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. Contributing factors were the pilot's lack experience in this category of aircraft. An additional factor was the inadequate upgrade training provided by the company that owned the airplane and was providing training.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING - TURN TO REVERSE DIRECTION

Findings

1. (C) AIRSPEED - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
 2. (C) STALL/SPIN - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND
 3. (F) LACK OF TOTAL EXPERIENCE IN KIND OF AIRCRAFT - PILOT IN COMMAND
 4. (F) INADEQUATE TRANSITION/UPGRADE TRAINING - COMPANY/OPERATOR MANAGEMENT
 5. (F) INADEQUATE TRANSITION/UPGRADE TRAINING - FLIGHT INSTRUCTOR(ON GROUND)
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Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Findings

6. TERRAIN CONDITION - GROUND

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	19
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	None
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:	165 hours (Total, all aircraft), 3 hours (Total, this make and model), 111 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 81 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 18 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N6847Z
Model/Series:	PA-25-235 PA-25-235	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Operator:	WILLIAM F. HOWELL	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None	Engine Model/Series:	O-540-B2C5
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Instructional		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	TLH, 55 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Weather Observation Facility
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 2500 ft agl	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	3 knots / , 70°
Temperature:	25° C	Visibility	5 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:		Destination:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	ALAN J YURMAN	Adopted Date:	02/15/2001
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/ .		

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