



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	LOCK HAVEN, PA	Accident Number:	IAD98LA074
Date & Time:	07/01/1998, 1105 EDT	Registration:	N760AB
Aircraft:	American Blimp Corp. ABC-A-60	Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Positioning		

Analysis

The pilot received a weather briefing in person from the Flight Service Station at the departure airport. The predicted headwinds for the planned airship flight over mountainous terrain were 15 knots gusting to 25 knots. An Airmet issued for the proposed route of flight 45 minutes after takeoff called for occasional moderate turbulence over rough terrain due to strong low-level winds. In cruise flight approximately 500-600 feet above ground level, the airship encountered '...a severe sustained downdraft...' that could not be overcome with full power and full up elevator. The airship subsequently collided with trees. An update to the same Airmet one hour after the accident called for occasional moderate and isolated severe turbulence over rough terrain.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the pilot's encounter with unforecasted downdrafts.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings

1. (C) WEATHER CONDITION - DOWNDRAFT
2. HAZARDOUS WEATHER ADVISORY - NOT AVAILABLE - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Findings

3. OBJECT - TREE(S)

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline Transport; Commercial	Age:	35
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane; Helicopter
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Airship; Helicopter	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:	5022 hours (Total, all aircraft), 2000 hours (Total, this make and model), 4000 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 168 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 45 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	American Blimp Corp.	Registration:	N760AB
Model/Series:	ABC-A-60 ABC-A-60	Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Operator:	ICARUS AIRCRAFT INC	Engine Manufacturer:	Limbach
Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None	Engine Model/Series:	L 2000 ECI
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Positioning		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	IPT, 529 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Weather Observation Facility
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 7000 ft agl	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	16 knots / 19 knots, 270°
Temperature:	23° C	Visibility	10 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	WILLIAMSPORT, PA (IPT)	Destination:	YOUNGSTOWN, OH (YNG)

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	2 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Latitude, Longitude:			

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	BRIAN C RAYNER	Adopted Date:	09/07/2000
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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