



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

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<b>Location:</b>	DILLINGHAM, AK	<b>Accident Number:</b>	ANC98LA138
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	09/02/1998, 1002 AKD	<b>Registration:</b>	N139F
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Grumman G-44	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	3 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter - Non-scheduled		

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## Analysis

The commercial pilot departed under special VFR conditions on a CFR part 135 flight for a remote lake. During the flight, low clouds, rain, and fog were present in an area of mountainous terrain along the route of flight. The pilot stated that he intended to utilize a narrow mountain pass to transit the area, and as he entered the mountain pass, discovered that the ceiling and visibility would not allow safe passage. He said that he made an emergency 180 degree turn in an attempt to exit the pass, and subsequently collided with terrain. After initial impact, the airplane slid downhill about 100 feet, and came to rest on a 35 degree slope. The pilot stated that weather conditions at the time of the accident consisted of: Ceiling, 500 foot overcast; visibility, 2 miles with rain and fog; wind 360 degrees, at 8 knots. The pilot noted that there were no preaccident anomalies with the airplane.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to maintain clearance with terrain. Contributing factors were the pilot's delayed remedial action (course reversal), low ceilings, rain, fog, and mountainous terrain.

## Findings

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Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER  
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING - TURN TO REVERSE DIRECTION

### Findings

1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - LOW CEILING
2. (F) REMEDIAL ACTION - DELAYED - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - FOG
4. (C) CLEARANCE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
5. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - RAIN
6. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - MOUNTAINOUS/HILLY

## Factual Information

On September 2, 1998, about 1002 Alaska daylight time, an amphibious Grumman G-44 airplane, N139F, sustained substantial damage during a collision with mountainous terrain, about 80 miles north of Dillingham, Alaska. The airplane was being operated as a visual flight rules (VFR) on-demand passenger flight under Title 14, CFR Part 135, when the accident occurred. The airplane was operated by Fresh Water Adventures, Inc., Dillingham. The certificated commercial pilot, and the two passengers aboard were not injured. Instrument meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of departure, and company flight following procedures were in effect. The flight originated at the Dillingham Airport, about 0840, under special VFR weather conditions.

During a telephone conversation with the National Transportation Safety Board investigator-in-charge on September 2, the pilot reported that he was transporting two hunters to a remote lake located about 100 miles north of Dillingham. During the flight, low clouds, rain, and fog were present in an area of mountainous terrain along the route of flight. The pilot stated that he intended to utilize a narrow mountain pass to transit the area, and as he entered the mountain pass, discovered that the ceiling and visibility would not allow safe passage. He said that he made an emergency 180 degree turn in an attempt to exit the pass, and subsequently collided with terrain. After initial impact, the airplane slid downhill about 100 feet, and came to rest on a 35 degree slope.

The airplane sustained substantial damage to the fuselage, wings, and elevator.

The pilot stated that weather conditions at the time of the accident consisted of: Ceiling, 500 foot overcast; visibility, 2 miles with rain and fog; wind 360 degrees, at 8 knots.

The closest official weather observation station is Dillingham, located about 80 nautical miles southeast of the accident site. On September 2, 1998, at 0925, an Aviation Routine Weather Report (METAR) was reporting, in part: Wind, 330 degrees at 6 knots; visibility, 3 statute miles with light rain and mist; clouds, 500 feet broken, 800 feet overcast; temperature, 48 degrees F; dew point, 48 degrees F; altimeter, 29.34 inHg.

The pilot noted that there were no preaccident anomalies with the airplane.

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	40, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Multi-engine Land; Multi-engine Sea; Single-engine Land; Single-engine Sea	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 2 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	06/03/1998
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>		<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	7800 hours (Total, all aircraft), 750 hours (Total, this make and model), 7600 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 350 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 100 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Grumman	<b>Registration:</b>	N139F
<b>Model/Series:</b>	G-44 G-44	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	No
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	1375
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Amphibian	<b>Seats:</b>	5
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	09/01/1998, 100 Hour	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	5400 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>		<b>Engines:</b>	2 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>		<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Continental
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed, activated, aided in locating accident	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	IO-470-D
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	LESTER R. BINGMAN	<b>Rated Power:</b>	260 hp
<b>Operator:</b>	FRESH WATER ADVENTURES	<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	On-demand Air Taxi (135)
<b>Operator Does Business As:</b>	FRESH WATER ADVENTURES, INC.	<b>Operator Designator Code:</b>	BPMC

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	PAD, 86 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	80 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	0925 ADT	Direction from Accident Site:	150°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown / 0 ft agl	Visibility	3 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 500 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	6 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	330°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	8° C / 8° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	, AK (DLG)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	Company VFR
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	Special VFR
Departure Time:	0940 ADT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

## Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	2 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 None	Latitude, Longitude:	

## Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	CLINTON O JOHNSON	Report Date:	03/30/2000
Additional Participating Persons:	ROBERT J MERCER (FAA); ANCHORAGE, 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 <a href="mailto:pubinquiry@ntsb.gov">pubinquiry@ntsb.gov</a> , or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at <a href="http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/">http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/</a> .		

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), established in 1967, is an independent federal agency mandated by Congress through the Independent Safety Board Act of 1974 to investigate transportation accidents, determine the probable causes of the accidents, issue safety recommendations, study transportation safety issues, and evaluate the safety effectiveness of government agencies involved in transportation. The NTSB makes public its actions and decisions through accident reports, safety studies, special investigation reports, safety recommendations, and statistical reviews.

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. A factual report that may be admissible under 49 U.S.C. § 1154(b) is available [here](#).