



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	SAN JOSE, CA	Accident Number:	LAX99LA002
Date & Time:	10/01/1998, 2013 PDT	Registration:	N957AF
Aircraft:	Cessna 152	Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The aircraft collided with mountainous terrain about 3,000 feet msl while descending from 4,500 feet toward the destination airport on a dark night. Weather reports showed consistent overcast cloud bases of 2,800 feet in the immediate area of the accident site. A review of the ATC tape revealed that the pilot did not clearly state his intentions when speaking with air traffic control. ATC had to ask him several times what he said and told him that they did not understand him. Interviews conducted with ATC controllers revealed that they were unsure exactly what the pilot intentions were other than to land at Reed Hillview airport. Weather in the area was deteriorating and ATC was in the process of sequencing traffic for IFR approaches into nearby airports. At one point ATC asked the pilot if he was going to find a hole and descend. The pilot stated affirmative. When radio and radar contact was lost, the controller asked a police helicopter flying near the last observed position to search for the airplane that had disappeared off the radar. The helicopter pilot told the controller that he was unable to proceed to the location due to clouds obscuring the ridges. The pilot stated he could hear a helicopter above him but could not see it because of poor visibility.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: Continued VFR flight by the pilot into instrument meteorological conditions (IMC) at night over mountainous terrain. The pilot's use of unclear language when stating his intentions to air traffic control was a factor.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings

1. TERRAIN CONDITION - MOUNTAINOUS/HILLY
2. WEATHER CONDITION - CLOUDS
3. LIGHT CONDITION - DARK NIGHT
4. (C) IN-FLIGHT PLANNING/DECISION - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND
5. (F) INFORMATION UNCLEAR(LANGUAGE) - PILOT IN COMMAND
6. (C) VFR FLIGHT INTO IMC - INTENTIONAL - PILOT IN COMMAND
7. SELF-INDUCED PRESSURE - PILOT IN COMMAND

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	22
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	None
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:	262 hours (Total, all aircraft), 111 hours (Total, this make and model), 166 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 140 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N957AF
Model/Series:	152 152	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Operator:	INTERWINGS CORPORATION	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None	Engine Model/Series:	O-235-L2C
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument Conditions	Condition of Light:	Night/Dark
Observation Facility, Elevation:	SJC, 58 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Weather Observation Facility
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 2800 ft agl	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	10 knots / , 340°
Temperature:	15°C	Visibility:	10 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	OAKDALE, CA (027)	Destination:	REED HILL VIEW, CA (RHV)

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	DEBORAH L CHILDRESS	Adopted Date:	04/20/2000
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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