



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	MOSINEE, WI	Accident Number:	CHI92FA066
Date & Time:	01/02/1992, 1305 CST	Registration:	N500BH
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-31P	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Fatal

Flight Conducted Under: Part 91: General Aviation - Business

Analysis

PILOT WAS CLEARED FOR AN ILS APPROACH AT HIS DESTINATION, AND REQUESTED TO REPORT ALTITUDE OF 3,000 FEET ON THE APPROACH. THIS WAS THE LAST RADIO TRANSMISSION RECEIVED FROM THE PILOT. AIRCRAFT WAS FOUND IN SOFT FIELD SIX MILES FROM THE AIRPORT. LANDING GEAR WAS UP, FLAPS WERE DOWN. FISHERMAN NEARBY REPORTED HEARING THE AIRCRAFT MANEUVERING AT LOW ALTITUDE. HE REPORTED THAT THE ENGINES SOUNDED FINE, BUT THE SOUND WAS CHANGING IN PITCH AND INTENSITY. HE REPORTED THAT GOT QUIET JUST A FEW SECONDS BEFORE HE HEARD THE IMPACT. THE INVESTIGATION REVEALED THAT THERE WAS EVIDENCE OF A FIRE IN THE NOSE BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT. THE CABIN HEATER IS LOCATED IN THE NOSE BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT, AND HAD A RECENT HISTORY OF DISCREPANCIES.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: AN INFLIGHT FIRE WITH THE CABIN HEATER AS THE ORIGIN, AND UNSUITABLE TERRAIN IN WHICH TO MAKE A FORCED LANDING. A FACTOR RELATED TO THE ACCIDENT WAS THE SOFT TERRAIN.

Findings

Occurrence #1: AIRFRAME/COMPONENT/SYSTEM FAILURE/MALFUNCTION
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

Findings

1. (C) AIR COND/HEATING/PRESSURIZATION - FIRE
2. (F) MAINTENANCE - INADEQUATE - OTHER MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL

Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - EMERGENCY

Findings

3. (C) TERRAIN CONDITION - NONE SUITABLE
4. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - SOFT

Occurrence #3: FIRE
Phase of Operation: OTHER

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	59, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	04/26/1991
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	8150 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1500 hours (Total, this make and model), 15 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N500BH
Model/Series:	PA-31P PA-31P	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	31P-7530024
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	10/25/1991, Continuous Airworthiness	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	7800 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	15 Hours	Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3520 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	TIGO-541-E1A
Registered Owner:	BECHER HOPPE ENGINEERS, INC.	Rated Power:	425 hp
Operator:	BECHER HOPPE ENGINEERS, INC.	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:	BECHER HOPPE ENGINEERS, INC.	Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	CWA, 1277 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	6 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1245 CST	Direction from Accident Site:	60°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown / 0 ft agl	Visibility	1 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 500 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	4 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	140°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	0°C / -1°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	MINNEAPOLIS, MN (MSP)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Destination:	MOSINEE, WI (CWA)	Type of Clearance:	IFR
Departure Time:	1219 CST	Type of Airspace:	Class E

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	In-Flight and On-Ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	In-Flight and On-Ground
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Mark E Doub	Report Date:	03/24/1993
Additional Participating Persons:	JR CHESTER J. CYBULSKI; MILWAUKEE, WI KAREN E BELNAY; MILWAUKEE, WI		
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 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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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](#).