



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	FORT CHAFFEE, AR	Accident Number:	FTW91FA045
Date & Time:	03/01/1991, 1655 CST	Registration:	N7488S
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-60-600	Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE PILOT OF THE MULTI-ENGINE AIRCRAFT REPORTED THAT HIS RIGHT ENGINE WAS LOSING OIL AS HE WAS CLIMBING TO CRUISE ALTITUDE. HE SECURED THE ENGINE, FEATHERED THE PROPELLER, AND MANEUVERED TO RETURN TO THE AIRPORT. THE PILOT TRIMMED THE AIRCRAFT FOR SINGLE ENGINE OPERATION AND EXTENDED THE MAIN LANDING GEAR. DURING THE APPROACH, THE OPERATING LEFT ENGINE WOULD NOT DEVELOP FULL POWER AND THE PILOT REPORTED TO ATC THAT HE COULD NOT MAKE THE AIRPORT. THE AIRCRAFT CONTINUED ITS EMERGENCY DESCENT, IMPACTED TREES, AND DESCENDED UNCONTROLLED THROUGH A DENSELY WOODED AREA. A FUEL TANK RUPTURED DURING THE UNCONTROLLED DESCENT THROUGH THE TREES AND A FIRE/EXPLOSION OCCURRED. THE AIRCRAFT CONTINUED TO BURN AFTER GROUND IMPACT. BOTH ENGINES WERE DISASSEMBLED AND NUMEROUS MECHANICAL ANOMALIES WERE FOUND. THEY HAD BEEN RECENTLY OVERHAULED. THIS WAS THE FIRST FLIGHT OF THE AIRCRAFT SINCE THE ENGINE OVERHAULS. THE PILOT/OWNER WAS EN ROUTE TO SELL THE AIRCRAFT WHEN THE ACCIDENT OCCURRED.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: THE PILOT'S OPERATION OF THE AIRCRAFT WITH KNOWN DEFICIENCIES IN EQUIPMENT. FACTORS WERE THE IMPROPER OVERHAUL OF THE ENGINES BY OTHER MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL RESULTING IN OIL LOSS, DETERIORATED ENGINE PERFORMANCE, AND UNSUITABLE TERRAIN.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(TOTAL) - MECH FAILURE/MALF
Phase of Operation: CLIMB - TO CRUISE

Findings

1. 1 ENGINE
2. (F) FLUID,OIL - LOSS,PARTIAL
3. (F) MAINTENANCE,OVERHAUL,MAJOR - IMPROPER - OTHER MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL
4. (C) OPERATION WITH KNOWN DEFICIENCIES IN EQUIPMENT - PERFORMED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(PARTIAL) - MECH FAILURE/MALF
Phase of Operation: APPROACH

Findings

- 5. ALL ENGINES
- 6. (F) MAINTENANCE, OVERHAUL, MAJOR - IMPROPER - OTHER MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Occurrence #4: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - EMERGENCY

Findings

- 7. OBJECT - TREE(S)
- 8. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - NONE SUITABLE

Occurrence #5: FIRE/EXPLOSION
Phase of Operation: OTHER

Findings

- 9. FUEL SYSTEM, TANK - RUPTURED

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	47
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:	1800 hours (Total, all aircraft), 500 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N7488S
Model/Series:	PA-60-600 PA-60-600	Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Operator:	LAWRENCE R. EDWARDS	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None	Engine Model/Series:	IO-540-G1B5
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	, 0 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Witness
Lowest Ceiling:	None / 0 ft agl	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	14 knots / 27 knots, 240°
Temperature:	23° C	Visibility	25 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	FORT SMITH, AR (FSM)	Destination:	VICKSBURG, MS (VKS)

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:	On-Ground

Latitude, Longitude:

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	O. R WALL	Adopted Date:	02/08/1993
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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