



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Factual Report

Location:	AUSTIN, NV	Accident Number:	LAX00TA212
Date & Time:	06/01/2000, 0615 PDT	Registration:	N4872A
Aircraft:	Piper PA-18-150	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 Minor

Flight Conducted Under: Part 91: General Aviation - Public Aircraft

On June 1, 2000, at 0615 hours Pacific daylight time, a PA-18-150, N4872A, collided with terrain while maneuvering near Austin, Nevada. The aircraft sustained substantial damage and the certificated commercial pilot and his passenger received minor injuries. The aircraft was being operated as a public-use flight by the United States Department of Agriculture, Office of Wildlife Services, when the accident occurred. The flight originated from the Austin airport at 0600. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time and a VFR company flight plan was filed.

The pilot reported that he had been monitoring an increase in the fuel burn rate over a period of time. His normal leaning procedure for best power operating from 5,800 feet mean sea level required more mixture control travel. On the day of the accident, it was the second time that the engine had failed to respond to throttle input. The subsequent loss of engine power occurred low to the terrain.

Post accident examination of the carburetor revealed a black composite float that felt heavier than normal. One pontoon exhibited light damage to the smooth shell. The engine spark plugs were lightly fuel sooted.

According to Precision Airmotive Corporation "mandatory" Service Bulletin MSA-1 (replacement of composite floats with metal floats), the type certificate holder of the carburetor, states that; "field reports indicate that composite floats may be absorbing fluid and sinking," replace the existing composite float with a metal float. A sinking float may result in disruption of fuel flow to the engine, Precision Airmotive therefore considers the replacement of composite floats with metal floats mandatory. Compliance is optional for 14 CFR Part 91 operators.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline Transport	Age:	46, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):		Restraint Used:	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane Single-engine	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	02/21/2000
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	04/29/1999
Flight Time:	8300 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1300 hours (Total, this make and model), 7740 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 109 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 44 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N4872A
Model/Series:	PA-18-150 PA-18-150	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	18-4969
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	04/01/2000, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1950 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	90 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3950 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	Avco Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	O-320-
Registered Owner:	Randy McCoy	Rated Power:	150 hp
Operator:	DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:	WIDLIFE SERVICES	Operator Designator Code:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	30 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	Light and Variable /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	Variable	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	-2 °C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	AUSTIN, NV (9U3)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	Company VFR
Destination:	(9U3)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	0600 PDT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	ROBERT R CRISPIN
Additional Participating Persons:	CLARENCE BOHARTZ; FAA-WP-Flight Standards District Office; Reno, NV
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/ .