



National Transportation Safety Board

Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	SAN JUAN BATIST, CA	Accident Number:	LAX01FA001
Date & Time:	10/01/2000, 2010 PDT	Registration:	N36TV
Aircraft:	Beech A36TC	Injuries:	4 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The airplane collided with mountainous/hilly terrain as the pilot descended in instrument conditions toward the destination airport. The non-instrument rated pilot was obtaining VFR flight advisories from Air Traffic Control, and told approach control that he intended to head for his destination in visual conditions. A few minutes later the pilot stated that he intended to circle down through a hole. At this time, approach lost radar contact at a mode C reported altitude of 3,500 feet on a southeasterly track in an area of hilly terrain where it is not uncommon to lose radar contact at that altitude or less. The controller assumed that he was losing the radar contact, terminated radar service, and approved a frequency change. The controller did not hear a response from the airplane. At 2009:29, the target was at a mode C reported altitude of 2,200 feet. By 2011:03, the target had turned left on a southwesterly track and was at a mode C reported altitude of 1,300 feet. This was the last recorded target for the flight's assigned secondary beacon code. The accident site elevation was about 1,000 feet. A resident who lived near the accident site reported that it was very foggy about the time of the accident, and estimated that the visibility was 100 feet..

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the pilot's in-flight decision to continue flight into instrument weather conditions at an altitude that did not maintain an adequate terrain clearance, which resulted in a collision with terrain. Factors were a dark night, clouds, fog, mountainous terrain, and lack of instrument rating.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT

Findings

1. (F) LIGHT CONDITION - DARK NIGHT
 2. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - CLOUDS
 3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - FOG
 4. (C) IN-FLIGHT PLANNING/DECISION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
 5. (C) VFR FLIGHT INTO IMC - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND
 6. (C) ALTITUDE/CLEARANCE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
 7. (F) LACK OF CERTIFICATION - PILOT IN COMMAND
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Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT

Findings

8. TERRAIN CONDITION - MOUNTAINOUS/HILLY

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	51
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	None
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:			

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Beech	Registration:	N36TV
Model/Series:	A36TC A36TC	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Operator:	SERGE J. HERRING	Engine Manufacturer:	Teledyne Continental
Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None	Engine Model/Series:	TSIO-520-UB
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:	SNS, 84 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Weather Observation Facility
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 500 ft agl	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	8 knots / , 320°
Temperature:	16° C	Visibility	5 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	MAMMOTH LAKES, CA (MMH)	Destination:	WATSONVILLE, CA (WVI)

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	3 Fatal	Aircraft Fire:	On-Ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Latitude, Longitude:	36.828333, -121.576389		

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): HOWARD D PLAGENS

Adopted Date: 06/02/2004

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.