



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

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<b>Location:</b>	UNIONTOWN, AL	<b>Accident Number:</b>	ATL88FA207
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	07/01/1988, 0707 CDT	<b>Registration:</b>	N8324V
<b>Aircraft:</b>	PIPER PA-32	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Business		

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## Analysis

PIC OBTAINED WX BRIEF AT ABOUT 0430 REGARDING AN IFR FLT. FSS SPECIALIST INFORMED PIC THERE WERE THUNDERSTORMS ALONG THE ROUTE OF FLT & TO CALL FOR UPDATE JUST PRIOR TO TAKEOFF. WX BRIEF INDICATED FLT WOULD BE INTO AN UNSTABLE AIR MASS DUE TO A QUASAI STATIONERY COLD FRONT. ABOUT 30 MINUTES AFTER TAKEOFF, VFR, PIC CONTACTED ARTCC FOR IFR CLNC STATING THERE WAS WX AHEAD. CONTROLLER SAID TO EXPECT MODERATE RAIN & LIGHT CHOP. PIC DID NOT SEEK WX UPDATE REGARDING PREVIOUSLY REPORTED TSTMS. WX RADAR DEPICTED AREA OF HEAVY PRECIPITATION TWO MINUTES PRIOR TO THE LOSS OF RADAR CONTACT & IN THE SAME GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION. RADAR SHOWED THAT TRACK & ALT OF ACFT WAS CONSISTENT FOR THE 6 MINUTES PRIOR TO LOSS OF CONTACT. ACFT BROKE APART IN FLT DUE TO DOWNWARD BENDING OF LEFT WING AND BOTH STABILATOR HALVES.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

## Findings

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Occurrence #1: AIRFRAME/COMPONENT/SYSTEM FAILURE/MALFUNCTION  
Phase of Operation: CRUISE - NORMAL

### Findings

1. (F) IN-FLIGHT BRIEFING SERVICE - NOT OBTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (C) PREFLIGHT PLANNING/PREPARATION - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) WEATHER CONDITION - THUNDERSTORM, LEVEL III
4. WING - OVERLOAD
5. WING - SEPARATION
6. (C) DESIGN STRESS LIMITS OF AIRCRAFT - EXCEEDED
7. (F) WEATHER EVALUATION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND

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Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER  
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

## Factual Information

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	42, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	Seatbelt
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	Airplane Single-engine; Instrument Airplane	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	Yes
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 2 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	07/17/1987
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>		<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	3098 hours (Total, all aircraft), 194 hours (Total, this make and model), 33 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft)		

### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	PIPER	<b>Registration:</b>	N8324V
<b>Model/Series:</b>	PA-32 PA-32	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	No
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	32-8106037
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Tricycle	<b>Seats:</b>	6
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	04/20/1988, 100 Hour	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	3600 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	30 Hours	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	1223 Hours	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	LYCOMING
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed, not activated	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	IO-540-K1G5
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	J.W. BELANGER/J. MICHAEL	<b>Rated Power:</b>	300 hp
<b>Operator:</b>	JOSEPH W. BELANGER	<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	TCL, 170 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	40 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	0655 CDT	Direction from Accident Site:	350°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown / 0 ft agl	Visibility	2 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 10000 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	Calm /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	23° C / 23° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	MOBILE, AL (15A)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Destination:	DECATUR, AL (DCU)	Type of Clearance:	IFR
Departure Time:	0622 CDT	Type of Airspace:	Class E

## Wreckage and Impact Information

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

## Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	CHARLES T FOUTS	Report Date:	01/04/1990
Additional Participating Persons:	WALTER J PIENODY; VERO BEACH, FL ROGER J ADERMAN; VERO BEACH, FL		
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 <a href="mailto:pubinq@ntsb.gov">pubinq@ntsb.gov</a> , or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at <a href="http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/">http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/</a> .		

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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](#).