



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	UNIONTOWN, AL	Accident Number:	ATL88FA207
Date & Time:	07/01/1988, 0707 CDT	Registration:	N8324V
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-32	Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Business		

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

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

Findings

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

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

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	42
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane Single-engine; Instrument Airplane
Flight Time:	3098 hours (Total, all aircraft), 194 hours (Total, this make and model), 33 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N8324V
Model/Series:	PA-32 PA-32	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Operator:	JOSEPH W. BELANGER	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None	Engine Model/Series:	IO-540-K1G5
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Business		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	TCL, 170 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Weather Observation Facility
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 10000 ft agl	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	Calm / ,
Temperature:	23°C	Visibility	2 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	MOBILE, AL (15A)	Destination:	DECATUR, AL (DCU)

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
Latitude, Longitude:			

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	CHARLES T FOUTS	Adopted Date:	01/04/1990
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 pubin@ntsb.gov , or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/ .		

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