



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	IMPERIAL, TX	Accident Number:	FTW87FA184
Date & Time:	08/01/1987, 1415 CDT	Registration:	N5998Y
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-23-250	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Fatal, 2 Serious, 3 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

AFTER TAKEOFF, THE PLT ELECTED TO FLY LOW OVER A RESERVOIR. HE STATED THAT AS HE BEGAN A PASS, NOT FAR FROM THE WATER'S EDGE, THE ACFT ENCTRD A SINK. HE SAID HE ' . . . CHECKED POWER, ALL OK, PLANE JUST SEEMED TO LOSE ALL LIFT . . .' SUBSEQUENTLY, THE ACFT STRUCK THE WATER, CRASHED & BEGAN SINKING. FIVE OCCUPANTS EGRESSSED FROM THE ACFT; THE 6TH RECEIVED FATAL INJURIES. WITNESSES SAW THE ACFT FLYING AT A VERY LOW ALT OVER THE WATER BEFORE THE PLANE CRASHED. THEY RPRTD THAT ON PREVIOUS OCCASIONS, THE PLT HAD MADE LOW PASSES OVER THE RESERVOIR IN THE SAME MANNER. THE PLT'S LAST MED CERT WAS DATED 11/16/84; THE ACFT'S LAST ANNUAL INSPN WAS DATED 8/15/84. DRG A WEIGHT & BALANCE CHECK, THE ACFT'S CG WAS ESTIMATED TO HAVE BEEN .2 INCH BEHIND THE AFT LIMIT.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

Findings

1. PROCEDURES/DIRECTIVES - NOT FOLLOWED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) AIRCRAFT WEIGHT AND BALANCE - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) LOW PASS - INTENTIONAL - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - UNFAVORABLE WIND
5. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - WATER
6. (C) ALTITUDE - MISJUDGED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	39, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Expired	Last FAA Medical Exam:	11/16/1984
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	375 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N5998Y
Model/Series:	PA-23-250 PA-23-250	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	27-3172
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	08/15/1984, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	5200 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	129 Hours	Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	4497 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	IO-540-C4B5
Registered Owner:	ALBERT L. GANDY	Rated Power:	250 hp
Operator:	ALBERT L. GANDY	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	MAF, 2871 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	75 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1347 CDT	Direction from Accident Site:	20°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear / 0 ft agl	Visibility	20 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None / 0 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	13 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	150°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	34° C / 16° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	GRAND FALLS, TX	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1430 CDT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	1 Fatal, 2 Serious, 2 Minor	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal, 2 Serious, 3 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	ARMOND V EDWARDS	Report Date:	03/31/1989
Additional Participating Persons:	MARION CHILDERS		
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 pubinquiry@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. A factual report that may be admissible under 49 U.S.C. § 1154(b) is available [here](#).