



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	BEAUFORT, SC	Accident Number:	ATL83FA081
Date & Time:	01/02/1983, 1028 EST	Registration:	N8066P
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-24-250	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	3 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

WHILE EN ROUTE IN IMC, THE ATC CONTROLLER NOTED THAT THE ACFT BEGAN TO REVERSE COURSE & ASKED THE PLT IF HE WAS HAVING A PROBLEM. THE PLT RESPONDED THAT THE ACFT WAS IN CLOUDS, HE WAS HAVING PROBLEM WITH HIS ARTIFICIAL HORIZON & THAT HE DIDN'T REALIZE HE WAS IN A TURN. SUBSEQUENTLY, HE REPORTED FAILURES OF THE ARTIFICIAL HORIZON & AUTOPILOT, AND SAID HE WAS USING NEEDLE, BALL & AIRSPEED. THE CONTROLLER PROVIDED GYRO OUT PROCEDURES, BUT THE PLT WAS UNABLE TO MAINTAIN AN ALTITUDE & HEADING. ALSO, WX THRU-OUT THE AREA CONSISTED OF LOW CEILINGS & CLOUDS TO ABOVE 18,000 FT. THE PLT WAS ADVISED THE BEST WX AROUND WAS AT CHATTANOOGA, TN, WHICH HAD 1300 SCATTERED, 2000 FT OVERCAST, VISIBILITY 3 MI WITH LIGHT RAIN & FOG. SHORTLY AFTER THAT, RADIO & RADAR CONTACT WERE LOST. PARTS OF THE ACFT WAS FOUND IN THE COMBEE RIVER. THE RIGHT WING WAS FOUND ABOUT 1000 FT FROM THE RIVER. THE VACUUM PUMP, ENG, TURN & BANK INDICATOR AND SEVERAL OTHER ITEMS WERE RECOVERED FROM THE RIVER, BUT NO MALFUNCTION OR FAILURE OF THESE WAS FOUND.

Probable Cause and Findings

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. (C) REASON FOR OCCURRENCE UNDETERMINED
2. (F) FLIGHT/NAV INSTRUMENTS,ATTITUDE INDICATOR - INOPERATIVE
3. (F) AUTOPILOT/FLIGHT DIRECTOR - INOPERATIVE

Occurrence #2: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings

4. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - CLOUDS
5. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - LOW CEILING
6. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - FOG
7. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - RAIN
8. (C) AIRCRAFT HANDLING - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
9. (C) SPATIAL DISORIENTATION - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #3: AIRFRAME/COMPONENT/SYSTEM FAILURE/MALFUNCTION
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Findings

10. WING - OVERLOAD

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):		Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane Single-engine	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	10/22/1981
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	1058 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N8066P
Model/Series:	PA-24-250 PA-24-250	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	24-3313
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	03/29/1982, 100 Hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2800 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	4814 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-540-A1D5
Registered Owner:	DONALD J. HUMKE	Rated Power:	250 hp
Operator:	DONALD J. HUMKE	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	NBC, 10 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	12 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	0956 EST	Direction from Accident Site:	180°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown / 400 ft agl	Visibility	5 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 400 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	6 knots / 13 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	350°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	9° C / 7° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	FT. MEYER, FL (FMY)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Destination:	WILMINGTON, NC	Type of Clearance:	IFR
Departure Time:	0758 EST	Type of Airspace:	Class E

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	GENE L SUNDEEN	Report Date:	
Additional Participating Persons:			
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/ .		

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), established in 1967, is an independent federal agency mandated by Congress through the Independent Safety Board Act of 1974 to investigate transportation accidents, determine the probable causes of the accidents, issue safety recommendations, study transportation safety issues, and evaluate the safety effectiveness of government agencies involved in transportation. The NTSB makes public its actions and decisions through accident reports, safety studies, special investigation reports, safety recommendations, and statistical reviews.

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](#).