



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	HANCOCK, MD	Accident Number:	ATL83FIG03
Date & Time:	01/02/1983, 1145 EST	Registration:	N8515U
Aircraft:	CESSNA 172F	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Fatal, 1 Serious, 2 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE AIRCRAFT COLLIDED WITH THE TOP TWO WIRES OF A POWERLINE DURING A LOW ALTITUDE SIGHT-SEEING FLIGHT ALONG THE POTOMAC RIVER. THE PILOT STATED HE WAS MAINTAINING VISUAL CONTACT WITH THE GROUND SHOULD AN EMERGENCY LANDING BECOME NECESSARY. HE WAS STAYING HIGH ENOUGH FOR CLEARANCE OF THE TREES. HE STATED THAT APPARENTLY THE TERRAIN WAS GETTING HIGHER WITHOUT HIS AWARENESS AND SUDDENLY THE WIRES BECAME VISIBLE JUST BEFORE THE COLLISION. ONE WIRE CONTACTED THE LANDING GEAR AND THE ACFT PITCHED DOWN OUT OF CONTROL AND CRASHED ON A ROCKY LEDGE ON AN ISLAND IN THE RIVER. THE FREE END OF ONE OF THE WIRES RECOILED ONTO HIGHWAY I-70 AND STRUCK TWO CARS CAUSING MINOR INJURIES TO 2 PERSONS.

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 OBJECT
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

Findings

1. (F) PROPER ALTITUDE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
 2. (F) OBJECT - WIRE, TRANSMISSION
 3. (C) VISUAL LOOKOUT - 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

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	21, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):		Restraint Used:	Seatbelt
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):		Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	10/22/1982
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	501 hours (Total, all aircraft), 388 hours (Total, this make and model), 393 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 16 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	CESSNA	Registration:	N8515U
Model/Series:	172F 172F	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	172-52415
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	10/01/1982, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2200 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	30 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	2822 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	CONTINENTAL
ELT:	Installed, activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-300-D
Registered Owner:	DAVID J. ALT, SR.	Rated Power:	145 hp
Operator:	DAVID J. ALT, SR.	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	HGR, 704 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	16 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1100 EST	Direction from Accident Site:	90°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown / 12000 ft agl	Visibility	7 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 12000 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	130°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	3° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	HANCOCK, MD (W35)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1142 EST	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	POTOMAC AIRPARK (W35)	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	2 Minor	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal, 1 Serious, 2 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	ROBERT D KOCH	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 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. A factual report that may be admissible under 49 U.S.C. § 1154(b) is available [here](#).