



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	COTTON, MN	Accident Number:	CHI81LA106
Date & Time:	08/01/1981, 0615 CDT	Registration:	N4988E
Aircraft:	CESSNA 180	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	4 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

WHILE ENROUTE IN THE COMPANY OF ANOTHER AIRCRAFT, CLOUDS WERE ENCOUNTERED. THE AIRCRAFT CONTINUED VFR INTO IMC CONDITIONS. SUBSEQUENTLY DEPARTURE FROM CONTROLLED FLIGHT OCCURRED AND ALTITUDE WAS NOT MAINTAINED. THE AIRCRAFT IMPACTED TREES AND THE TERRAIN IN A REMOTE AREA. THE ACCIDENT OCCURRED ON AUGUST 1, 1981. THE AIRCRAFT WAS LOCATED ON NOVEMBER 5, 1990.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: THE PILOT-IN-COMMAND'S FAILURE TO MAINTAIN ALTITUDE AND AIRCRAFT CONTROL AFTER AN ENCOUNTER WITH INSTRUMENT METEOROLOGICAL CONDITIONS.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER

Phase of Operation: UNKNOWN

Findings

1. WEATHER CONDITION - CLOUDS
2. VFR FLIGHT INTO IMC - ENCOUNTERED - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. IN-FLIGHT PLANNING/DECISION - POOR - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT

Phase of Operation: UNKNOWN

Findings

4. (C) PROPER ALTITUDE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
5. (C) AIRCRAFT CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Findings

6. OBJECT - TREE(S)

Occurrence #4: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Findings

7. TERRAIN CONDITION - ROUGH/UNEVEN

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	40, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land; Single-engine Sea	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):		Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Unknown	Last FAA Medical Exam:	07/14/1981
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	207 hours (Total, all aircraft), 63 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	CESSNA	Registration:	N4988E
Model/Series:	180 180	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:		Serial Number:	30103
Landing Gear Type:	Float	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2550 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	0 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	CONTINENTAL
ELT:	Installed	Engine Model/Series:	O-470-K
Registered Owner:	IRVIN W. GRIES	Rated Power:	230 hp
Operator:	IRVIN W. GRIES	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	DLH, 1430 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	23 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	0600 CDT	Direction from Accident Site:	165°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown / 400 ft agl	Visibility	2 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 400 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	4 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	260°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	-18°C / -18°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	SAND LAKE, MN (NONE)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	OSHKOSH, WI (OSH)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	0600 CDT	Type of Airspace:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	3 Fatal	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	4 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	STEPHEN A WILSON	Report Date:	11/06/2001
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/ .		

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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](#).