



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	Marathon, FL	Accident Number:	MIA01GA070
Date & Time:	02/01/2001, 1951 EST	Registration:	N99WD
Aircraft:	Piper PA-32-300	Injuries:	2 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Public Aircraft		

Analysis

The accident pilot was conducting a night intercept training mission with a Coast Guard airplane. The accident pilot stated that it was getting a bit hazy and informed the Coast Guard pilot that he would be breaking off and turning to the north to get separation for another intercept. The Coast Guard airplane accelerated and asked the accident pilot to proceed north at a slower airspeed to allow separation. The accident pilot responded I'm IMC maintaining 180 degrees. The Coast Guard pilot informed the accident pilot that they were well to the north and there was no conflict. There was no other radio communication with the accident pilot. Review of radar data revealed that the accident airplane continued south bound at 1,600 feet before making a slight left turn followed by a turn back to the right at 00:48:08. The airplane made another turn to the left and back to the right. AT 00:49:47, the airplane is observed to start a left turn, and stops on a north heading at 1,500 feet. At 00:50:47, the airplane is observed to start a right turn. The last recorded radar hit is at 00:51:08, at 1,500 feet. Examination of the airframe, flight controls, engine assembly and accessories , vacuum pump and flight instruments revealed no evidence of a precrash mechanical failure or malfunction. Review of the pilot's log book revealed the pilot was awarded an instrument rating on December 23, 2000, and had flown two flights consisting of .8 since obtaining the instrument rating.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot-in-command's lack of recent experience in instrument flight resulting in the pilot becoming spatially disoriented, and subsequent in-flight collision with water while descending.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

Findings

1. LIGHT CONDITION - NIGHT
2. (C) LACK OF RECENT INSTRUMENT TIME - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. SPATIAL DISORIENTATION - PILOT IN COMMAND

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

Findings

4. TERRAIN CONDITION - WATER

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	50
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:	1586 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1375 hours (Total, this make and model), 1414 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 166 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 52 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 6 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Other Flight Crew Information

Certificate:	None	Age:	
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Instrument Rating(s):	None
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:			

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N99WD
Model/Series:	PA-32-300	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Operator:	Casey A. Purvis	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None	Engine Model/Series:	IO-540-K1A5
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Public Aircraft		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Night/Dark
Observation Facility, Elevation:	MTH, 7 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Weather Observation Facility
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	5 knots / , 110°
Temperature:	22° C	Visibility	9 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Opa Locka, FL (OPF)	Destination:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	2 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Latitude, Longitude:	24.902222, -80.934722		

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Carrol A Smith

Adopted Date: 10/09/2001

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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