



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	Healy, AK	Accident Number:	ANC01LA099
Date & Time:	08/03/2001, 1250 AKD	Registration:	N9794M
Aircraft:	Cessna 207	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	6 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter - Non-scheduled		

Analysis

The certificated commercial pilot was flying the second airplane in a flight of two airplanes, within an area of mountainous terrain. Shortly after takeoff he lost sight of the first airplane, but was able to maintain radio contact. As the flight progressed, it began to rain, accompanied by diminished visibility and low ceilings. He then became disoriented to his exact position, and he mistakenly turned into a small valley. The pilot said that once he entered the valley, the terrain began rising, so he initiated a climb. The valley became too narrow to turn around, and the clouds began to close around the airplane as he continued to climb. The terrain continued to rise, and he noticed his airspeed was decreasing. Shortly thereafter, the airplane collided with rising terrain, and sustained substantial damage.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's continued flight into adverse weather conditions after becoming lost/disoriented. Factors in the accident were rising terrain, a blind/box canyon, low clouds, and rain.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER
Phase of Operation: CLIMB

Findings

1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - CLOUDS
2. (C) BECAME LOST/DISORIENTED - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - RAIN
4. (C) FLIGHT INTO ADVERSE WEATHER - CONTINUED - PILOT IN COMMAND

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

Findings

5. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - MOUNTAINOUS/HILLY
6. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - RISING
7. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - BLIND/BOX CANYON

Factual Information

On August 3, 2001, about 1250 Alaska daylight time, a wheel-equipped Cessna 207 airplane, N9794M, sustained substantial damage during an in-flight collision with terrain, about 15 miles east of Healy, Alaska. The airplane was being operated as a visual flight rules (VFR) on-demand passenger flight under Title 14, CFR Part 135, when the accident occurred. The airplane was registered to Ronald D. Rosso, and operated by Denali Air Taxi, Inc., Denali Park, Alaska. The certificated commercial pilot, and the five passengers aboard, were not injured. Instrument meteorological conditions prevailed in the area of the accident, and VFR company flight following procedures were in effect. The flight originated from the Denali Wilderness Lodge about 1240, en route to the Denali Airstrip.

During a telephone conversation with the National Transportation Safety Board investigator-in-charge on August 4, the pilot reported that his airplane was the second airplane in a flight of two airplanes transporting lodge guests to the Denali Airstrip. He stated that shortly after takeoff he lost sight of the first airplane, but maintained radio contact. He added that the standard route to the Denali Airstrip was through mountainous terrain. As the flight progressed, it began to rain, accompanied by worsening visibility and low ceilings. The pilot said that he became disoriented to his exact position, and mistakenly turned into a small valley. He said that once he entered the valley, the terrain began rising, so he initiated a climb. The valley became too narrow to turn around, and the clouds began to close around the airplane as he continued to climb. The terrain continued to rise, and he noticed his airspeed was decreasing. Shortly thereafter, the airplane collided with rising terrain, and sustained substantial damage.

The emergency locator transmitter (ELT) activated, and personnel from a local helicopter operator at Denali Park, began a search, and found the airplane wreckage.

The pilot stated that there were no preaccident mechanical anomalies with the airplane.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	58, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land; Single-engine Sea	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	03/30/2001
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	04/26/2001
Flight Time:	2762 hours (Total, all aircraft), 245 hours (Total, this make and model), 2634 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 329 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 120 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 6 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N9794M
Model/Series:	207	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	20700730
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	07/21/2001, 100 Hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3800 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	60.6 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	6438 Hours at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Installed, activated, aided in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	IO-520-F
Registered Owner:	Ronald D. Rosso	Rated Power:	300 hp
Operator:	Denali Air Taxi, Inc.	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	On-demand Air Taxi (135)
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	DLIA

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:		Visibility	0.25 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 0 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	Light and Variable /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	13° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Healy, AK (HRR)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	Company VFR
Destination:	Denali Airstrip, AK (AK06)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1250 ADT	Type of Airspace:	Class E

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	5 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	6 None	Latitude, Longitude:	63.700000, -148.200000

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Clinton O Johnson	Report Date:	06/03/2002
Additional Participating Persons:	Terry A Bateman; Federal Aviation Administration; Anchorage, AK		
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.ntsbt.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](#).