



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	Lindsay, MT	Accident Number:	SEA02LA001
Date & Time:	10/01/2001, 1700 MDT	Registration:	N3910F
Aircraft:	Cessna 172	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot reported that he was flying in cruise configuration at 300 feet AGL when the aircraft collided with the terrain. He reported that a communication radio was making wind noise, and he was attempting to adjust it at the time of the accident. The pilot reported that he could not remember the details surrounding the accident sequence. There was no report of mechanical malfunction or failure at the time of the accident.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to maintain an altitude clear of terrain. A factor was intentional low altitude flight.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: CRUISE - NORMAL

Findings

1. (C) ALTITUDE/CLEARANCE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) LOW ALTITUDE FLIGHT/MANEUVER - INTENTIONAL - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

On October 1, 2001, about 1700 mountain daylight time, a Cessna 172, N3910F, was destroyed when it collided with terrain near Lindsay, Montana. The airplane was owned by the pilot, and was being operated as a personal/pleasure flight under the provisions of Title 14, CFR Part 91, when the accident occurred. The private pilot, the sole occupant of the airplane, received serious injuries. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and a visual flight rules (VFR) flight plan was filed and activated for the cross-country flight. The flight originated from Glendive, Montana (GDV), approximately 30 minutes prior to the accident. The pilot's planned destination was Helena, (HLN), Montana.

During a telephone interview with a NTSB investigator on October 1st, the pilot reported that he was adjusting the airplane's radio while in a cruise configuration at an altitude of 300 feet above ground level (AGL). The pilot reported in a written statement that the communications radio on the copilot side was making noise due to airflow from the vent, and he was attempting to adjust its position just prior to the accident. He reported that he remembered "pulling up" just before the airplane collided with terrain. The pilot stated that he was unable to recall any of the detailed events leading up to the accident.

The pilot reported in a written statement that prior to the flight, he amended the flight plan cruise altitude from 6500 feet to 4500 feet. The pilot reported on the Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident Report Form no mechanical malfunction or failure at the time of the accident.

The automated weather observation at Glendive, Montana (GDV), at 1655 reported winds from 160 degrees at 6 knots, 10 statute miles visibility, and clear skies. Glendive is approximately 25 nautical miles west of the accident site.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	41, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	12/28/2000
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	11/01/2000
Flight Time:	339 hours (Total, all aircraft), 95 hours (Total, this make and model), 272 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 47 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 18 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N3910F
Model/Series:	172	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal; Utility	Serial Number:	36810
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	03/24/2001, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1695 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	100 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3100 Hours at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	O-300
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	145 hp
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	GDV, 2456 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	25 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1655 MDT	Direction from Accident Site:	270°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	6 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	160°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29.87 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	27° C / 7° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Glendive, MT (GDV)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	VFR
Destination:	Helena, MT (HLN)	Type of Clearance:	VFR
Departure Time:	1630 MDT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Dennis J Hogenson **Report Date:** 06/03/2002

Additional Participating Persons: Ken Conrad; FAA- Helena FSDO; Helena, MT

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](#).