



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

<b>Location:</b>	Palm Bay, FL	<b>Accident Number:</b>	MIA02FA079
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	04/02/2002, 0826 EST	<b>Registration:</b>	N91FK
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Piper PA-23-250	<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

## Analysis

The flight departed from Pompano Beach Airpark and flew to Okeechobee County Airport where approximately 79 gallons of fuel were added to the fuel tanks; no reports of fuel problems were reported by pilots who were later contacted and whom had fueled from the same source either the day before, or the day of. The flight departed reportedly en route to Ormond Beach and after takeoff, climbed to a maximum altitude of 4,400 feet while flying on a northerly heading. The airplane remained on a northerly heading but began descending at an average rate of 200 feet per minute, with several times remaining at the previous altitude. The flight continued north and descended to 2,600 feet and began a right turn. Review of radar data indicates that between the last two radar targets, the airplane lost 1,000 feet of altitude in 12 seconds while turning to the right; the airplane at that time was on top of a layer of fog that extended up to 1,240 feet. A witness reported hearing the sound of an impact and drove to near the accident site but did not observe the wreckage; he did not notify law enforcement. The airplane impacted into a marsh resulting in destruction of the airplane which was located 2 days after the accident. The engines were located but could not be recovered. The fuselage and wings were fragmented. Examination of the airplane revealed no evidence of an in-flight break-up or of a fire. The stabilator trim was found full nose-down, but the cables were fractured. No autopilot system components were recovered. The autopsy report indicates the loss of most of the brain and heart.

## Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The in-flight loss of control for undetermined reasons resulting in the in-flight collision with terrain.

## Findings

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

### Findings

1. (C) REASON FOR OCCURRENCE UNDETERMINED

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

### Findings

2. TERRAIN CONDITION - WATER

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	67
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None
<b>Flight Time:</b>	11163 hours (Total, all aircraft), 27 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Piper	<b>Registration:</b>	N91FK
<b>Model/Series:</b>	PA-23-250	<b>Engines:</b>	2 Reciprocating
<b>Operator:</b>	George J. Apostle	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Lycoming
<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	IO-540-C4B5
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Instrument Conditions	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	KMLB, 33 ft msl	<b>Weather Information Source:</b>	Weather Observation Facility
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:</b>	5 knots / , 240°
<b>Temperature:</b>	21° C	<b>Visibility</b>	4 Miles
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>			
<b>Departure Point:</b>	Okeechobee, FL (KOBK)	<b>Destination:</b>	Ormond Beach, FL (KOMN)

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	27.901667, -80.749722		

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Timothy W Monville	<b>Adopted Date:</b>	12/06/2002
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	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 <a href="mailto:pubinq@ntsb.gov">pubinq@ntsb.gov</a> , or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at <a href="http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/">http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/</a> .		

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