



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	Port Alsworth, AK	Accident Number:	ANC03LA011
Date & Time:	11/03/2002, 1310 AST	Registration:	N32TN
Aircraft:	Douglas DC-3	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	3 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter - Non-scheduled		

Analysis

A Douglas DC-3 airplane was landing at a privately owned airstrip. The operator's general manager reported that during a prelanding inspection of the airstrip, both pilots noticed a large tractor parked alongside the approach end of the airstrip, and planned to fly an approach accordingly. As the approach phase of the landing continued, the flight encountered a slight downdraft as the airplane passed over the approach end of airstrip. During the slight descent, just before touchdown, the airplane's left wing struck a 25-foot high iron mast that was attached to the parked tractor, severing about 14 feet of the airplane's outboard left wing. After the collision, the crew was able to complete the landing. Both flight crew members reported that they were unaware the 25-foot high iron mast was attached to the tractor.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The flightcrew's failure to maintain clearance while landing, which resulted in an in-flight collision with a 25-foot high iron mast. Contributing factors were a downdraft, and a 25-foot high iron mast attached to a tractor.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - DOWNDRAFT
2. (C) CLEARANCE - NOT MAINTAINED - FLIGHTCREW
3. (F) OBJECT - VEHICLE

Factual Information

On November 3, 2002, about 1310 Alaska Standard Time, a Douglas DC-3 airplane, N32TN, sustained substantial damage when it struck an object while landing at a privately owned airstrip located at Port Alsworth, Alaska. The airplane was being operated as a visual flight rules (VFR) cargo flight under Title 14, CFR Part 135, when the accident occurred. The airplane was operated as Flight 1028 by TransNorthern, LLC., Anchorage, Alaska. The commercial certificated captain, airline transport certificated first officer, and one passenger, were not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and company flight-following procedures were in effect. The flight originated at the Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport, Anchorage, about 1205.

During a telephone conversation with the National Transportation Safety Board investigator-in-charge on November 4, the operator's general manager reported that the airplane was being utilized to transport building materials to Port Alsworth. The general manager said that the crew told her that during a prelanding inspection of the Port Alsworth airstrip, both crew members noticed a large tractor that was parked alongside the approach end of the airstrip. She said that the crew planned to fly an approach that would avoid the tractor. She said as the approach phase of the landing continued, the crew encountered a slight downdraft as the airplane passed over the approach end of runway 05L. During the slight descent, just before touchdown, the airplane's left wing struck a 25-foot high iron mast that was attached to the parked tractor. After the collision, the crew was able to complete the landing. A postaccident inspection of the airplane revealed that 14 feet of the airplane's left wing was severed from the airplane during the collision. Additionally, the left elevator was damaged.

The captain reported to the general manager that he, as well as the first officer, were unaware the 25-foot high iron mast was attached to the tractor.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	51, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane Multi-engine; Airplane Single-engine; Instrument Airplane	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	06/29/2002
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	07/20/2002
Flight Time:	9000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 49 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Co-Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline Transport	Age:	53, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; 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:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	06/25/2002
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	10/07/2002
Flight Time:	15000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 60 hours (Total, this make and model), 28 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Douglas	Registration:	N32TN
Model/Series:	DC-3	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Transport	Serial Number:	93301
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tailwheel	Seats:	3
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	06/22/2002, Continuous Airworthiness	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	29325 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	13655.9 Hours	Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	13709.3 Hours at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Wright
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	1820-80
Registered Owner:	TRANSNORTHERN AVIATION INC	Rated Power:	1475 hp
Operator:	TRANSNORTHERN AVIATION INC	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	On-demand Air Taxi (135)
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	TN8A

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:		Visibility	20 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 7500 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	20 knots / 30 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	30°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	15° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Anchorage, AK (ANC)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	Company VFR
Destination:	Port Alsworth, AK	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1205 AST	Type of Airspace:	Class E

Airport Information

Airport:	Port Alsworth	Runway Surface Type:	Gravel
Airport Elevation:	400 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	5L	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	4000 ft / 200 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Full Stop

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	2 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 None	Latitude, Longitude:	60.183333, -154.333333

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Clinton O Johnson	Report Date:	07/23/2003
Additional Participating Persons:	John B Alley; 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.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](#).