



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

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<b>Location:</b>	Greenwood, SC	<b>Accident Number:</b>	ATL03LA050
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	03/01/2003, 0056 EST	<b>Registration:</b>	N67524
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Cessna 152	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Minor
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

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## Analysis

According to the pilot, during cruise flight at 2000 feet, the airplane entered clouds and the pilot began to descend to 1200 feet. The pilot requested assistance from air traffic, and was cleared to initiate a 180-degree turn. During the 180-degree turn the pilot became disoriented and collided with the ground. No mechanical or flight control malfunctions were reported by the non-instrument rated pilot.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's continued visual flight into instrument meteorological conditions and loss of aircraft control, which resulted in an in-flight collision with the ground.

## Findings

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

### Findings

1. (C) WEATHER CONDITION - LOW CEILING
2. (C) VFR FLIGHT INTO IMC - CONTINUED - PILOT IN COMMAND

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Occurrence #2: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT  
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

### Findings

3. (C) AIRSPEED - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

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Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER  
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

### Findings

4. TERRAIN CONDITION - GROUND

## Factual Information

On March 1, 2003, at 0056 eastern standard time, a Cessna 152, N67524, registered to Aiken Air Service and operated by a private pilot, collided with the ground during a 180-degree turn near Greenwood County Airport, Greenwood, South Carolina. The personal flight was operated under the provision of Title 14 CFR Part 91 and visual flight rules. Instrument meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of accident. The airplane sustained substantial damage, and the private pilot received minor injuries. The flight originated from Donaldson Center Airport, Greenville, South Carolina, on March 1, 2003 at 2350.

According to the pilot, he was in cruise flight at 2000 feet, when he contacted Atlanta Center for flight following. Approximately 10 minutes after contacting Atlanta Center, the weather began to deteriorate. The pilot reported he entered clouds and was descending to 1200 feet where he believed it was clear. The pilot was still in the clouds and requested assistance from Atlanta Center. Atlanta Center cleared the pilot to make a 180-degree turn. The pilot reported the 180-degree turn, he became disoriented and collided with the ground.

Examination of the airplane revealed, the airplane came to rest in a stand of trees. The main fuselage and cabin area were buckled. Both wings of the airplane buckled back towards the vertical and horizontal stabilizers. No mechanical or flight control malfunctions were reported by the pilot prior to the flight.

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Private	<b>Age:</b>	46, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine Land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 3 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	01/16/2002
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>		<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	89 hours (Total, all aircraft), 21 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N67524
Model/Series:	152	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	15285301
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	01/02/2003, 100 Hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1670 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	30 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	6665 Hours at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-235-L2C
Registered Owner:	Aikin Air Service	Rated Power:	115 hp
Operator:	Curtis Merriweiler	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument Conditions	Condition of Light:	Night
Observation Facility, Elevation:	GRD, 631 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	5 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	0056 EST	Direction from Accident Site:	360°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Partial Obscuration	Visibility	2.5 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 200 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	3 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	90°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.19 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	5°C / 5°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	GREENVILLE, SC (7A1)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	AIKEN, SC (AIK)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	2350 EST	Type of Airspace:	Class G

## Airport Information

Airport:	GREENWOOD COUNTY (GRD)	Runway Surface Type:	Unknown
Airport Elevation:	631 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Unknown
Runway Used:		IFR Approach:	Unknown
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	Unknown

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 Minor	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	1 Minor	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	34.248611, -82.158889

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Eric H Alleyne	<b>Report Date:</b>	06/28/2006
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	Harlan Sparrow; Columbia FSDO; Columbia, SC		
<b>Publish Date:</b>			
<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.ntsbt.gov/pubdms/">http://dms.ntsbt.gov/pubdms/</a> .		

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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](#).