



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Factual Report

Location:	Koyukuk, AK	Accident Number:	ANC04LA018
Date & Time:	01/02/2004, 1630 AST	Registration:	N45008
Aircraft:	Piper PA-31-350	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter - Non-scheduled		

On January 2, 2004, about 1630 Alaska standard time, a Piper PA-31-350 airplane, N45008, sustained substantial damage when it collided with terrain about 3 miles southeast of Koyukuk, Alaska, while maneuvering in whiteout conditions. The airplane was being operated by Larry's Flying Service, Inc., Fairbanks, Alaska, as a visual flight rules (VFR) cargo flight under Title 14, CFR Part 135, at the time of the accident. The solo airline transport pilot was seriously injured. Instrument meteorological conditions prevailed, and company VFR flight following procedures were in effect. The flight departed Galena, Alaska, about 1620.

During a telephone conversation with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigator-in-charge (IIC) on January 2, the chief pilot for the operator said he was tracking the accident flight from Galena to Koyukuk because basic VFR minimums prevailed, and snow showers had been reported along the route of flight. He said when the flight failed to check in at the anticipated arrival time, he contacted the Koyukuk village agent. He said the village agent reported hearing the airplane overhead, but a snow shower had reduced the visibility to zero. When the accident airplane could not be contacted by radio, a search was initiated. Searchers located the airplane about 3 miles southeast of the village. According to the chief pilot, the accident pilot said he entered a snow squall and descended along the riverbed trying to maintain visual contact with the ground, and was in whiteout conditions when the airplane collided with terrain. The airplane sustained structural damage to the wings, fuselage, and tail. The chief pilot indicated that the accident pilot told him there were no preaccident mechanical anomalies with the airplane.

The NTSB IIC had a telephone conversation with the accident pilot on January 8. During that conversation, the accident pilot reported essentially the same information as the chief pilot.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline Transport	Age:	49, 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:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	12/02/2003
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	12/14/2003
Flight Time:	5283 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1400 hours (Total, this make and model), 500 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 358 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 123 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N45008
Model/Series:	PA-31-350	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	31-8052167
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	10
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	12/26/2003, AAIP	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	7368 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	4006 Hours	Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	12808 Hours as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	LTIO-540-J2BD
Registered Owner:	LARRYS FLYING SERVICE INC	Rated Power:	350 hp
Operator:	LARRYS FLYING SERVICE INC	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	Commuter Air Carrier (135); On-demand Air Taxi (135)
Operator Does Business As:	Larrys Flying Service Inc.	Operator Designator Code:	FWRA

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	1 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Obscured / 100 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	Calm /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	-29°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Galena, AK (PAGA)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	Company VFR
Destination:	Koyukuk, AK (KYU)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1600 AST	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Serious	Latitude, Longitude:	64.876111, -157.727222

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Lawrence R Lewis
Additional Participating Persons:	Jim Watson; Fairbanks, FSDO-01; Fairbanks, AK
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/ .