



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	Waterloo, AL	Accident Number:	ATL04LA164
Date & Time:	08/01/2004, 1621 CDT	Registration:	N970SP
Aircraft:	Cessna 172S	Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot told an acquaintance he would fly the airplane over the acquaintance's home and over the river. Two witnesses in a boat, both of whom were certificated flight instructors, observed the airplane flying low and circling over the river as if searching for a house or a boat. The witnesses then saw the airplane slowly descend to approximately 50 feet above the water, level off, and continue to fly over the water for about a mile or more. They then saw the airplane nose up steeply and climb to approximately 250 to 300 feet. The witnesses stated, "the aircraft stalled, made a half turn to the right, and plunged nose-first into the water." Examination of the airplane revealed no evidence of mechanical malfunction was observed.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to maintain adequate airspeed while maneuvering at low altitude, which resulted in a stall and subsequent uncontrolled descent and collision into water.

Findings

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

Findings

1. (C) AIRSPEED - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. STALL - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. LOW ALTITUDE FLIGHT/MANEUVER - PERFORMED - PILOT IN COMMAND

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

Findings

4. TERRAIN CONDITION - WATER

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	40
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	None
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:	683 hours (Total, all aircraft), 630 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 17 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N970SP
Model/Series:	172S	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Operator:	Douglas Aviation, Inc.	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None	Engine Model/Series:	IO-360-L2A
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KMSL, 550 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Weather Observation Facility
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	6 knots / , 10°
Temperature:	32° C	Visibility	10 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Savannah, TN (KSNH)	Destination:	Olive Branch, MS (KOLV)

Airport Information

Airport:	Savannah - Hardin County (KSNH)	Runway Surface Type:	
Runway Used:		Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Length/Width:			

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Latitude, Longitude:	34.910556, -88.060556		

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Catherine E Gagne

Adopted Date: 10/27/2005

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/>.

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), established in 1967, is an independent federal agency mandated by Congress through the Independent Safety Board Act of 1974 to investigate transportation accidents, determine the probable causes of the accidents, issue safety recommendations, study transportation safety issues, and evaluate the safety effectiveness of government agencies involved in transportation. The NTSB makes public its actions and decisions through accident reports, safety studies, special investigation reports, safety recommendations, and statistical reviews.

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.