



## National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Factual Report

---

|                                |                                      |                         |                    |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Location:</b>               | Seward, AK                           | <b>Accident Number:</b> | ANC06LA015         |
| <b>Date &amp; Time:</b>        | 01/02/2006, 1100 AST                 | <b>Registration:</b>    | N212RF             |
| <b>Aircraft:</b>               | Cessna 180                           | <b>Aircraft Damage:</b> | Substantial        |
| <b>Defining Event:</b>         |                                      | <b>Injuries:</b>        | 1 Fatal, 1 Serious |
| <b>Flight Conducted Under:</b> | Part 91: General Aviation - Personal |                         |                    |

---

On January 2, 2006, about 1100 Alaska standard time, a wheel-equipped Cessna 180 airplane, N212RF, sustained substantial damage when it collided with terrain during maneuvering flight, about 7 miles east of Seward, Alaska. The airplane was being operated by the pilot as a visual flight rules (VFR) personal cross-country flight under Title 14, CFR Part 91, when the accident occurred. The airline transport pilot received serious injuries, and the sole passenger received fatal injuries. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and no flight plan was filed. The flight departed the Quartz Creek airstrip, Cooper Landing, Alaska, about 1030.

A U.S. Coast Guard C-130 airplane from Coast Guard Air Station Kodiak, was flying in the area of the accident, and received an emergency signal from the accident airplane's emergency locator transmitter (ELT), about 1205. The Coast Guard airplane located the accident airplane on the Godwin Glacier, and relayed its location to the Rescue Coordination Center (RCC) in Anchorage, Alaska. A helicopter from the Alaska, Air National Guard, 210th Rescue Squadron, was dispatched to the scene, but was unable to reach the site due to clouds obscuring the accident site. After aborting several attempts to reach the site due to weather on the glacier, the helicopter made it to the site about 2000.

During a telephone conversation with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigator-in-charge (IIC) on January 4, the Air National Guard para-rescue technician who made initial contact with the pilot, said the pilot told him he had been flying up the glacier, encountered a downdraft, and was being pushed down. He said the pilot told him he turned down slope to "escape" when the airplane contacted the glacier. The rescue technician described the accident site as a snow-covered glacial slope of 10 degrees or less, about 4,100 feet in elevation, and noted that they were able to land their helicopter on the slope. He said the airplane contacted the glacier up slope from where it had come to rest, and that the landing gear had separated from the airplane, and lay upslope from the main wreckage.

During an interview with the NTSB IIC and an FAA Aviation Safety Inspector on January 4, the pilot said he departed Cooper Landing for a private airstrip he frequents at Cape Junken, Alaska, which is typically a 30 minute flight. He said his general routine is to fly over Seward, cross a saddle near the top of the glacier at 4,500 feet above sea level, and proceed to Cape

Junken. He said he did not recall anything out of the ordinary, and said there were no problems with the airplane or its engine. He said he does not have any independent recollection of the accident.

During a telephone conversation with the NTSB IIC on January 12, the aircraft commander of the Coast Guard C-130 airplane that located the wreckage, said they were transiting the area of the accident when they received a signal from the accident airplane's emergency locator transmitter (ELT). He said the area had an overcast cloud cover, which was underneath them. He located clear air where they could descend, and returned to the accident site underneath the overcast. He said they could see up the glacier, and that there was about 200 feet of clearance between the saddle at the top of the glacier and the cloud cover. He said as they passed over the accident site approaching the saddle, their navigation instruments indicated a 40 knot headwind, and that the mountaintops on either side of the glacier were obscured by clouds. The aircraft commander said they were able to circle in a bowl near the accident site for a short time until deteriorating weather forced them back on top of the overcast.

In a written statement to the NTSB dated January 27, the pilot wrote that while maneuvering in the mountains at 4,500 feet altitude, he encountered what he believed was severe turbulence and downdrafts.

An area weather forecast valid at the time of the accident, indicated areas of marginal VFR weather with rain and snow showers. The forecast does not indicate any turbulence. The closest automated weather reporting facility is at the Seward Airport, about 7 miles from the accident site. Observations taken during the timeframe of the accident indicate rapidly varying visibilities from 10 miles to less than 1 mile, and ceilings varying from 100 feet to 6,000 feet.

As of August 2006, the airplane was not recovered from the glacier. No pieces or parts of the accident airplane were taken or retained by the NTSB.

## Pilot Information

|                                  |                                       |  |            |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|------------|
| <b>Certificate:</b>              | Airline Transport; Flight Instructor  | <b>Age:</b>                              | 60, Male   |
| <b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>       | Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land | <b>Seat Occupied:</b>                    | Left       |
| <b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b> | None                                  | <b>Restraint Used:</b>                   | Seatbelt   |
| <b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>     | Airplane                              | <b>Second Pilot Present:</b>             | No         |
| <b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>     | Instrument Airplane                   | <b>Toxicology Performed:</b>             | No         |
| <b>Medical Certification:</b>    | Class 2 With Waivers/Limitations      | <b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>            | 06/01/2005 |
| <b>Occupational Pilot:</b>       |                                       | <b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b> | 06/01/2005 |
| <b>Flight Time:</b>              | 25000 hours (Total, all aircraft)     |  |            |

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

|                                      |  |                                       |                 |
|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Aircraft Make:</b>                | Cessna   | <b>Registration:</b>                  | N212RF          |
| <b>Model/Series:</b>                 | 180  | <b>Aircraft Category:</b>             | Airplane        |
| <b>Year of Manufacture:</b>          |  | <b>Amateur Built:</b>                 | No              |
| <b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>    | Normal   | <b>Serial Number:</b>                 | 32394           |
| <b>Landing Gear Type:</b>            | Tailwheel  | <b>Seats:</b>                         | 4               |
| <b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b> | 04/01/2005, Annual                               | <b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>       | 2500 lbs        |
| <b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>   |  | <b>Engines:</b>                       | 1 Reciprocating |
| <b>Airframe Total Time:</b>          | 6500 Hours as of last inspection                 | <b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>           | Continental     |
| <b>ELT:</b>                          | Installed, activated, aided in locating accident | <b>Engine Model/Series:</b>           | O-470K          |
| <b>Registered Owner:</b>             | Wayne Koecher                                    | <b>Rated Power:</b>                   | 230 hp          |
| <b>Operator:</b>                     | Wayne Koecher                                    | <b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b> | None            |

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

|   |                          |   |         |
|---|--------------------------|---|---------|
| <b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>     | Visual Conditions        | <b>Condition of Light:</b>                  | Day     |
| <b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b> |                          | <b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>         |         |
| <b>Observation Time:</b>                |                          | <b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>        |         |
| <b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>          | Scattered / 4000 ft agl  | <b>Visibility</b>                           | 3 Miles |
| <b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>                  | Overcast / 4500 ft agl   | <b>Visibility (RVR):</b>                    |         |
| <b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>                | 40 knots /               | <b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>     | /       |
| <b>Wind Direction:</b>                  | 360°                     | <b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b> | /       |
| <b>Altimeter Setting:</b>               |                          | <b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>               | -7° C   |
| <b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>   | Light - Blowing - Snow   |   |         |
| <b>Departure Point:</b>                 | Cooper Landing, AK (JLA) | <b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>           | None    |
| <b>Destination:</b>                     | Cape Junken, AK          | <b>Type of Clearance:</b>                   | None    |
| <b>Departure Time:</b>                  | 1045 AST                 | <b>Type of Airspace:</b>                    |         |

## Wreckage and Impact Information

|                            |                    |                             |                        |
|----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Crew Injuries:</b>      | 1 Serious          | <b>Aircraft Damage:</b>     | Substantial            |
| <b>Passenger Injuries:</b> | 1 Fatal            | <b>Aircraft Fire:</b>       | None                   |
| <b>Ground Injuries:</b>    | N/A                | <b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>  | None                   |
| <b>Total Injuries:</b>     | 1 Fatal, 1 Serious | <b>Latitude, Longitude:</b> | 60.155278, -149.215556 |

## Administrative Information

---

**Investigator In Charge (IIC):** Lawrence R Lewis

**Additional Participating Persons:** Mike Dolsen; Anchorage, FSDO-03; Anchorage, 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](mailto:pubinq@ntsb.gov), or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at <http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/>.