



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	Beluga, AK	Accident Number:	ANC06LA032
Date & Time:	03/01/2006, 1800 AST	Registration:	N777YA
Aircraft:	Douglas DC-3	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter - Non-scheduled		

Analysis

The airline transport pilot was landing a non-scheduled cargo flight under Title 14, CFR Part 135, at a gravel airstrip. While on final approach to land, the airplane struck treetops, but landed safely. The left wing of the airplane received structural damage.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to maintain altitude/clearance from trees on final approach, which resulted in an in-flight collision with trees.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - FINAL APPROACH

Findings

1. OBJECT - TREE(S)
2. (C) ALTITUDE/CLEARANCE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Factual Information

On March 1, 2006, about 1800 Alaska standard time, a Douglas DC-3 airplane, N777YA, sustained substantial damage during an in-flight collision with trees on final approach to the Beluga Airport, Beluga, Alaska. The airplane was being operated by Transnorthern Aviation Inc., Anchorage, Alaska, as a visual flight rules (VFR) non-scheduled cargo flight under Title 14, CFR Part 135, when the accident occurred. The airline transport certificated pilot, and the first officer were not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and company VFR flight following procedures were in effect. The flight departed the Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport, Anchorage, about 1700.

During a telephone conversation with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigator-in-charge (IIC) on March 3, an FAA principal operations inspector said he had found an airplane with extensive left wing leading edge damage at the Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport. He said the operator told him the damage occurred while the pilot was landing at the Beluga Airport, on March 1.

During a telephone conversation with the NTSB IIC on March 3, a representative of the operator said the pilot reported striking trees at the approach end of the runway during landing. She said the airplane landed without incident, and the pilot subsequently flew the airplane to Anchorage.

In a written statement to the NTSB dated March 2, the pilot confirmed that the airplane struck treetops on final approach to the Beluga Airport, but landed safely.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline Transport	Age:	63, 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):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Without Waivers/Limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	06/01/2005
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	10/01/2005
Flight Time:	14690 hours (Total, all aircraft), 7250 hours (Total, this make and model), 14600 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 31 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 8 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Co-Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	40, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land; Single-engine Sea	Seat Occupied:	Right
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 2 With Waivers/Limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	01/01/2006
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	10/01/2005
Flight Time:	1400 hours (Total, all aircraft), 30 hours (Total, this make and model), 1350 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 107 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 76 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Douglas	Registration:	N777YA
Model/Series:	DC-3	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	25634
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tailwheel	Seats:	3
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	02/01/2006, AAIP	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	26900 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	25659 Hours as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	Pratt & Whitney
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	1830-92
Registered Owner:	Bush Air Cargo Inc.	Rated Power:	1200 hp
Operator:	Transnorthern Aviation Inc.	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	On-demand Air Taxi (135)
Operator Does Business As:	Transnorthern Aviation	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:	Clear	Visibility	10 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	Calm /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Anchorage, AK (PANC)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	Company VFR
Destination:	Beluga, AK (PABG)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1700 AST	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	Beluga (PABG)	Runway Surface Type:	Gravel; Snow
Airport Elevation:	130 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Snow
Runway Used:	36	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	5000 ft / 100 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Full Stop; Traffic Pattern

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	61.172222, -151.043889

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Lawrence R Lewis	Report Date:	07/31/2006
Additional Participating Persons:	Michael L Dolsen; Anchorage, FSDO-03; 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](#).