



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	San Diego, CA	Accident Number:	LAX07TA051
Date & Time:	12/01/2006, 1035 PST	Registration:	N26FN
Aircraft:	Learjet 36	Injuries:	3 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The airplane sustained an in-flight loss of the right elevator during an in-flight upset while maneuvering. The pilot was flying the airplane from the left seat. The mishap airplane rendezvoused with another Learjet to begin a series of profiles for flight testing. The crew noted that the horizon was very difficult to discern. While maneuvering for the second set of data points, the pilot lost sight of the other airplane, and rolled right to remain clear. His vision was impaired by the glare from the sun, which delayed his recognition of the airplane entering an unusual attitude. The pilot initiated recovery with the airplane in an estimated 70-degree right bank, 50-degree nose down attitude, and an airspeed of 380 KIAS. During the dive, the crew noted that the airplane was definitely shuddering, but did not recall any rolling tendencies or vibration of the control yoke. The crew conducted a controllability check by slowing it to 150 KIAS and lowering the landing gear. Again the airplane exhibited no unusual flight characteristics. The remainder of the flight and landing were uneventful. During post flight inspection, the aircrew discovered that the right elevator was missing.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to maintain aircraft control while maneuvering, which resulted in exceeding the design stress limits of the aircraft. Contributing to the accident was the sunglare.

Findings

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

Findings

1. (F) LIGHT CONDITION - SUNGLARE
 2. (C) AIRCRAFT CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
 3. (F) VISUAL/AURAL DETECTION - PILOT IN COMMAND
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Occurrence #2: AIRFRAME/COMPONENT/SYSTEM FAILURE/MALFUNCTION
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Findings

4. FLIGHT CONTROL,ELEVATOR - SEPARATION
5. (C) DESIGN STRESS LIMITS OF AIRCRAFT - EXCEEDED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline Transport	Age:	60
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:	19581 hours (Total, all aircraft), 12016 hours (Total, this make and model), 16473 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 186 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 27 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Co-Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	38
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane; Helicopter
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Instructor Rating(s):	None
Flight Time:	2086 hours (Total, all aircraft), 891 hours (Total, this make and model), 248 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 205 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 52 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Manufacturer:	Learjet	Registration:	N26FN
Model/Series:	36	Engines:	2 Turbo Fan
Operator:	L-3 Communications Flight Internata	Engine Manufacturer:	Garrett
Air Carrier Operating Certificate:	None	Engine Model/Series:	TFE 731-2-2B
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Observation Facility, Elevation:	NZY, 26 ft msl	Weather Information Source:	Weather Observation Facility
Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Lowest Ceiling:	None
Condition of Light:	Day	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	Calm
Temperature:	21°C / -9°C	Visibility:	7 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:	Haze		
Departure Point:	San Diego, CA (NZY)	Destination:	

Airport Information

Airport:	NORTH ISLAND NAS/HALSEY FIELD (NZY)	Runway Surface Type:	
Runway Used:	NA	Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Length/Width:			

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	2 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Howard Plagens

Adopted Date: 03/31/2008

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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