



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	Valdosta, GA	Accident Number:	ERA15CA117
Date & Time:	02/02/2015, 1300 EST	Registration:	N42993
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-32-301	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Hard landing	Injuries:	4 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot reported that he was landing the airplane in turbulent conditions with gusting wind. He stated that during the landing flare, the airplane encountered an updraft, followed immediately by a downdraft. The airplane subsequently impacted the runway and the nose landing gear collapsed, resulting in substantial damage to the engine firewall. The pilot reported there were no mechanical malfunctions or anomalies of the airplane that would have precluded normal operation. Review of archived weather information for the accident airport about the time of the accident revealed variable wind at 9 knots with gusts to 19 knots.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to compensate for gusty wind conditions during the landing flare, which resulted in a hard landing and subsequent nose landing gear collapse.

Findings

Aircraft	Landing flare - Not attained/maintained (Cause)
Personnel issues	Lack of action - Pilot (Cause)
Environmental issues	Sudden wind shift - Response/compensation

Factual Information

History of Flight

Landing-flare/touchdown	Hard landing (Defining event)
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Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	44
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Without Waivers/Limitations	Last Medical Exam:	09/17/2013
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	01/16/2015
Flight Time:	353 hours (Total, all aircraft), 100 hours (Total, this make and model), 41 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 23 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Manufacturer:	PIPER	Registration:	N42993
Model/Series:	PA-32-301	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	32-8306025
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	01/15/2015, 100 Hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3600 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3400 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	IO-540 K1G5
Registered Owner:	BC AVIATION LLC	Rated Power:	300 hp
Operator:	BC AVIATION LLC	Air Carrier Operating Certificate:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Observation Facility, Elevation:	VLD, 198 ft msl	Observation Time:	1215 EST
Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles	Condition of Light:	Day
Direction from Accident Site:	335°	Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Temperature/Dew Point:	13°C / 3°C
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility	10 Miles
Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	9 knots/ 19 knots, 300°	Visibility (RVR):	
Altimeter Setting:	29.99 inches Hg	Visibility (RVV):	
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Gulfport, MS (GPT)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Destination:	Valdosta, GA (VLD)	Type of Clearance:	IFR
Departure Time:	0900 CST	Type of Airspace:	Class D

Airport Information

Airport:	Valdosta Regional (VLD)	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	207 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	35	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	8001 ft / 100 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Full Stop; Straight-in

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	3 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	4 None		

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Allison N Diaz	Adopted Date:	07/29/2015
Additional Participating Persons:	Danny Cox; FAA/FSDO; Atlanta, GA		
Publish Date:	07/29/2015		
Note:	This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.		
Investigation Docket:	http://dms.ntsb.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=90684		

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