



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

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<b>Location:</b>	Ketchikan, AK	<b>Accident Number:</b>	ANC15MA041
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	06/25/2015, 1215 AKD	<b>Registration:</b>	N270PA
<b>Aircraft:</b>	DEHAVILLAND DHC-3	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>	Controlled flight into terr/obj (CFIT)	<b>Injuries:</b>	9 Fatal
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter - Non-scheduled - Sightseeing		

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## Analysis

The Safety Board's full report is available at <http://www.nts.gov/investigations/AccidentReports/Pages/aviation.aspx>. The Aircraft Accident Report number is NTSB/AAR-17/02.

On June 25, 2015, about 1215 Alaska daylight time, a single-engine, turbine-powered, float-equipped de Havilland DHC-3 (Otter) airplane, N270PA, collided with mountainous, tree-covered terrain about 24 miles east-northeast of Ketchikan, Alaska. The commercial pilot and eight passengers sustained fatal injuries, and the airplane was destroyed. The airplane was owned by Pantechnicon Aviation, of Minden, Nevada, and operated by Promech Air, Inc., of Ketchikan. The flight was conducted under the provisions of 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 135 as an on-demand sightseeing flight; a company visual flight rules flight plan (by which the company performed its own flight-following) was in effect. Marginal visual flight rules conditions were reported in the area at the time of the accident. The flight departed about 1207 from Rudyerd Bay about 44 miles east-northeast of Ketchikan and was en route to the operator's base at the Ketchikan Harbor Seaplane Base, Ketchikan.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

- (1) the pilot's decision to continue visual flight into an area of instrument meteorological conditions, which resulted in his geographic disorientation and controlled flight into terrain; and
- (2) Promech's company culture, which tacitly endorsed flying in hazardous weather and failed to manage the risks associated with the competitive pressures affecting Ketchikan-area

air tour operators; its lack of a formal safety program; and its inadequate operational control of flight releases.

## Findings

<b>Personnel issues</b>	Decision making/judgment - Pilot (Cause) Geographic disorient (lost) - Pilot (Cause)
<b>Environmental issues</b>	Ceiling/visibility/precip - Decision related to condition (Cause)
<b>Organizational issues</b>	Safety - Operator (Cause) Pressures/demands - Operator (Cause) Standard operating practices - Operator (Cause) Oversight of operation - Operator (Cause)

## Factual Information

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## History of Flight

Enroute-cruise	Controlled flight into terr/obj (CFIT) (Defining event)
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## Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	64
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land; Single-engine Sea	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	3-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Without Waivers/Limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	03/23/2015
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	3912 hours (Total, all aircraft), 37 hours (Total, this make and model), 3912 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 153 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 91 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	DEHAVILLAND	Registration:	N270PA
Model/Series:	DHC-3	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1958	Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	270
Landing Gear Type:	Float	Seats:	
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	06/10/2015, AAIP	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Turbo Prop
Airframe Total Time:	24439.5 Hours at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	
ELT:	C91A installed, activated, aided in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	
Registered Owner:	PANTECHNICON AVIATION LTD	Rated Power:	
Operator:	Promech Air, Inc.	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	On-demand Air Taxi (135)
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	Q5IA

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KTN, 92 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	24 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1953 UTC	Direction from Accident Site:	71°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 800 ft agl	Visibility	6 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 1200 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	15 knots / 23 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	130°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29.91 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	16° C / 14° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	Moderate - Mist; Moderate - Rain		
Departure Point:	Ketchikan, AK	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	Company VFR
Destination:	Ketchikan, AK	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1200 AKD	Type of Airspace:	Class G

## Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	8 Fatal	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	9 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	55.456389, -131.146111 (est)

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	David B Banning	<b>Report Date:</b>	05/17/2017
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	Patrick Hempen; Federal Aviation Administration; Washington, DC Karen Reich; Holland America Group; CA Les Doud; Hartzell Propeller Marcus Sessoms; Promech Air; FL Clark Hassell; Promech Air; Ketchikan, AK Robert DuRall; Genesys Aerosystems; TX Bob Grace; Promech Air; Ketchikan, AK		
<b>Publish Date:</b>	11/15/2017		
<b>Note:</b>	The NTSB traveled to the scene of this accident.		
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=91435">http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=91435</a>		

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. A factual report that may be admissible under 49 U.S.C. § 1154(b) is available [here](#).