



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

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<b>Location:</b>	Nikolai, AK	<b>Accident Number:</b>	ANC18CA017
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	11/29/2017, 1202 AKS	<b>Registration:</b>	N1386A
<b>Aircraft:</b>	PIPER PA 18-125	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>	Nose over/nose down	<b>Injuries:</b>	1 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Public Aircraft		

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## Analysis

The pilot reported that he had completed one high- and two low-reconnaissance flights over the snow-covered runway in his tundra-tire-equipped, tailwheel airplane. Before landing, he intended to fly a low pass and drag the main landing gear along the surface of the runway to determine the depth of the snow. He said that, as the main landing gear wheels touched down atop the frozen layer of crusty snow, the wheels broke through, and the airplane's tail began to rise. In an effort to prevent a nose-over, he applied full power, but the airplane subsequently nosed over.

The airplane sustained substantial damage to the rudder and both left and right lift struts.

The pilot reported that there were no preaccident mechanical malfunctions or failures that would have precluded normal operation.

## Probable Cause and Findings

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

The pilot's improper decision to contact an unsuitable landing surface, which resulted in a nose-over.

## Findings

Personnel issues	Decision making/judgment - Pilot (Cause)
Environmental issues	Snow/slush/ice covered surface - Decision related to condition (Cause)

## Factual Information

### History of Flight

Landing	Miscellaneous/other Nose over/nose down (Defining event)
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### Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	43, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land; Single-engine Sea	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane Single-engine	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Without Waivers/Limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	06/14/2017
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	06/14/2017
Flight Time:	8200 hours (Total, all aircraft), 7600 hours (Total, this make and model), 7900 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 80 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 20 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 4.6 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N1386A
Model/Series:	PA 18-125 125	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1951	Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	18-1219
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	07/06/2017, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1499 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	4321 Hours as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	C126 installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	O-320 SERIES
Registered Owner:	STATE OF ALASKA	Rated Power:	160 hp
Operator:	STATE OF ALASKA	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	PAMC	Distance from Accident Site:	54 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	2053 UTC	Direction from Accident Site:	330°
Lowest Cloud Condition:		Visibility	10 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 10000 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	Calm /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	28.98 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	-16°C / -19°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	McGrath, AK (PAMC)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	Company VFR
Destination:	Anchorage, AK (PALH)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	0938 AST	Type of Airspace:	Class G

## Airport Information

Airport:	TATITNA (8KA)	Runway Surface Type:	Snow
Airport Elevation:	1490 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Snow
Runway Used:	N/A	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	Touch and Go

## 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:	62.293333, -153.361944 (est)

## Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	David B Banning	Report Date:	05/14/2018
Additional Participating Persons:	Bruce Cummings; Federal Aviation Administration; Anchorage, AK		
Publish Date:	08/15/2019		
Note:	This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.		
Investigation Docket:	<a href="http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=96523">http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=96523</a>		

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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](#).