



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Preliminary Report

---

<b>Location:</b>	Marana, AZ	<b>Accident Number:</b>	WPR19LA259
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	09/13/2019, 1730 MST	<b>Registration:</b>	N4403Z
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Piper PA28	<b>Injuries:</b>	3 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Instructional		

---

On September 13, 2019, about 1730 mountain standard time, a Piper PA-28-181, airplane, N4403Z, caught fire during preflight startup at the Marana Regional Airport (AVQ), Marana, Arizona. The flight instructor and two student pilots were not injured. The airplane sustained substantial damage to the firewall. The airplane was registered to CAE Oxford Aviation Academy Phoenix, Inc, and operated as an instructional flight under the provisions of Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed for the flight and no flight plan was filed.

According to the flight instructor, after landing at AVQ, he and the student pilots exited the airplane, used the airport facilities, and had the airplane refueled. About 30 minutes after the airplane was shut down, the flight instructor completed his preflight and he and the student pilots boarded the airplane. During the preflight, the flight instructor stated he did not see any fuel or liquids during the walk around. After a second failed attempt to start the engine the flight instructor and student pilots smelled smoke. The flight instructor saw smoke coming from the nose wheel well and he and the student pilots stood clear of the airplane and called the local authorities. The airplane continued to smoke for about 15 minutes before the fire department arrived.

During a post-accident examination of the airplane, the cowling was removed which revealed substantial damage to the firewall. The cowling and various lines and accessories sustained thermal damage.

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Piper	<b>Registration:</b>	N4403Z
<b>Model/Series:</b>	PA28 181	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Amateur Built:</b>	No		
<b>Operator:</b>	Cae Oxford Aviation Academy Phoenix Inc	<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	Pilot School (141)

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual Conditions	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	KAVQ, 2031 ft msl	<b>Observation Time:</b>	0035 UTC
<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	0 Nautical Miles	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	37° C / 2° C
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Clear	<b>Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:</b>	5 knots / , 320°
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Visibility:</b>	10 Miles
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	29.88 inches Hg	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Departure Point:</b>	Mesa, AZ (FFZ)	<b>Destination:</b>	Marana, AZ (AVQ)

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	3 None	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	On-Ground
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	3 None	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	32.403889, -111.219722

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Andrew L Swick
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	Dan Meeker; FAA-FSDO; Scottsdale, AZ Kathryne Whitaker; Piper Aircraft; Phoenix, AZ Mike Caldera; Lycoming Engines; Williamsport, PA Chad Szwarnowicz; AVStar Fuel Systems, Inc; Jupiter, FL Peter Nielson; Precision Airmotive LLC; Arlinton, WA Brent Crow; CAE; Mesa, AZ
<b>Note:</b>	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.