



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	SPENCER, VA	Accident Number:	ATL83AA031
Date & Time:	11/14/1982, 1830 EST	Registration:	N3538R
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-31-310	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	8 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE PILOT FILED AN IFR CLEARANCE AND TOOK OFF ON RUNWAY 30 AFTER DARK. AT THAT TIME, THE AIRPORT MANAGER WAS IN HIS LIVING QUARTERS, GETTING READY TO EAT HIS EVENING MEAL. HE REPORTED THAT FROM HIS POSITION, THE TAKEOFF HEIGHT LOOKED NORMAL. AS THE AIRCRAFT DEPARTED, HE NOTICED NO UNUSUAL SOUNDS, EXCEPT HE HEARD WHAT HE THOUGHT WAS SHOTS FROM A RIFLE. ANOTHER WITNESS HEARD WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS A LOUD POP AND THE SOUND OF ENGINE SPUTTER FOLLOWED BY A CRASH SOUND. LATER, THE AIRCRAFT WRECKAGE WAS FOUND ABOUT 1 1/2 MI NORTHWEST OF THE AIRPORT. THE INVESTIGATION REVEALED THAT IT HAD COLLIDED WITH TREES AND THE WRECKAGE WAS SCATTERED OVER AN AREA ABOUT 1000 FT LONG. NO PREIMPACT MALFUNCTION OR FAILURE OF THE ENGINES WAS FOUND. THE PROPELLER BLADES WERE FOUND TWISTED AND BENT. THE FLIGHT CONTROLS WERE ALL ACCOUNTED FOR AND EXAMINED AND NO PREIMPACT FAILURES WERE FOUND. NO BULLET IMPACT MARKS WERE FOUND ON ANY PIECE OF THE WRECKAGE.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings

1. (F) LIGHT CONDITION - DARK NIGHT
2. (C) PROPER CLIMB RATE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (F) OBJECT - TREE(S)

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	54, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):		Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	1250 hours (Total, all aircraft), 300 hours (Total, this make and model), 1075 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 45 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 25 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N3538R
Model/Series:	PA-31-310 PA-31-310	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:		Serial Number:	31-7912115
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	8
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	6500 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	27 Hours	Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	847 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed	Engine Model/Series:	TIO-540-A2C
Registered Owner:	7 C'S TRANSPORTATION, INC.	Rated Power:	310 hp
Operator:	7 C'S TRANSPORTATION, INC.	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Night/Dark
Observation Facility, Elevation:	DAN, 0 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	30 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	0000	Direction from Accident Site:	0°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown / 0 ft agl	Visibility	15 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Unknown / 0 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	/ 0° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	SPENCER, VA (C)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	GREENVILLE, SC (C)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1830	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	BLUE RIDGE AIRPORT (MTV)	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	0 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	30	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	3600 ft / 75 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	7 Fatal	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	8 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Report Date:	11/14/1983
Additional Participating Persons:		
Publish Date:		
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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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](#).