



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	PERRIS, CA	Accident Number:	LAX85FA240
Date & Time:	05/04/1985, 1920 PDT	Registration:	N157U
Aircraft:	DOUGLAS DC3	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	33 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 125: 20+ Pax,6000+ lbs		

Analysis

THE AIRCRAFT'S LEFT ENGINE CAUGHT FIRE DURING THE TAKEOFF ROLL. THE PILOT MANAGED TO STOP THE AIRCRAFT ON THE RUNWAY AND ALL 31 SKYDIVERS AND THE TWO MEMBER CREW EVACUATED WITHOUT INJURY. THE LEFT ENGINE PROPELLER HAD LOST ONE BLADE WHICH WAS FOUND SEVERAL DAYS LATER 3000 FEET WEST OF THE WRECKAGE. THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE FOUND TO SUBSTANTIATE COMPLIANCE WITH A MANDATORY AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVE ON THE PROPELLER BLADE.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

Findings

Occurrence #1: AIRFRAME/COMPONENT/SYSTEM FAILURE/MALFUNCTION

Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - ROLL/RUN

Findings

1. (C) PROPELLER SYSTEM/ACCESSORIES, BLADE - FAILURE, TOTAL
2. (F) MAINTENANCE, COMPLIANCE WITH AD - NOT OBTAINED - COMPANY MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL
3. (C) PROPELLER SYSTEM/ACCESSORIES, BLADE - SEPARATION

Occurrence #2: FIRE/EXPLOSION

Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - ROLL/RUN

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	40, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	08/22/1984
Occupational Pilot:	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:		
Flight Time:	2200 hours (Total, all aircraft), 800 hours (Total, this make and model), 75 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 10 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	DOUGLAS	Registration:	N157U
Model/Series:	DC3 DC3	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Transport	Serial Number:	4132
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	03/01/1985, AAIP	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	12500 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	60 Hours	Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	42950 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	WRIGHT
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	R-1820-GC
Registered Owner:	BENNIE E. CONATSER	Rated Power:	1200 hp
Operator:	PERRIS VALLEY PARACENTER	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	RIV, 816 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	16 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1855 PDT	Direction from Accident Site:	300°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear / 0 ft agl	Visibility	5 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None / 0 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	10 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	310°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	19° C / 10° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1920 PDT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	PERRIS VALLEY (L65)	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt; Dirt
Airport Elevation:	1413 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	15	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	5000 ft / 65 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	2 None	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	31 None	Aircraft Fire:	On-Ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	On-Ground
Total Injuries:	33 None	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	AUDREY M SCHUTTE	Report Date:	
Additional Participating Persons:	JAMES DICKSON; RIVERSIDE, CA MARTIN BUCKNIAN; BURLINGTON, MA		
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 pubinquiry@ntsb.gov , or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/ .		

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](#).