



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	ROCKFORD, IL	<b>Accident Number:</b>	CHI87FA219
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	09/22/1987, 0802 CDT	<b>Registration:</b>	N5850S
<b>Aircraft:</b>	BEECH H-18	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Positioning		

## Analysis

THE COMMERCIAL PILOT WAS ON A REPOSITIONING FLIGHT FROM KENOSHA, WISCONSIN TO ATLANTA, GEORGIA, AFTER HAVING BEEN WITHOUT SLEEP FOR ABOUT 20 HOURS. WITNESSES OBSERVED THE AIRCRAFT CIRCLING A SUBDIVISION NEAR ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS AT A LOW ALTITUDE, JUST ABOVE THE TREETOPS. THE AIRCRAFT WAS IN A STEEP LEFT BANK, DESCRIBED AS 70-90 DEGREES, WHEN IT REVERSED DIRECTION INTO A STEEP RIGHT BANK AND DESCENDED INTO THE TREES.

## Probable Cause and Findings

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

### Findings

#### Occurrence #1: ABRUPT MANEUVER

Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING - TURN TO REVERSE DIRECTION

#### Findings

1. (C) CLEARANCE - MISJUDGED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (F) FATIGUE(LACK OF SLEEP) - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) JUDGMENT - POOR - PILOT IN COMMAND

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#### Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT

Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING - TURN TO REVERSE DIRECTION

#### Findings

4. (F) OBJECT - TREE(S)

## Factual Information

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	20, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	Yes
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 2 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	12/12/1986
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>		
<b>Flight Time:</b>	3200 hours (Total, all aircraft), 800 hours (Total, this make and model), 2600 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft)		

### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	BEECH	<b>Registration:</b>	N5850S
<b>Model/Series:</b>	H-18 H-18	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	No
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	BA720
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Retractable - Tailwheel	<b>Seats:</b>	
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	08/27/1987, 100 Hour	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	9900 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	37 Hours	<b>Engines:</b>	2 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	6716 Hours	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	P&W
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	R-985-AN14B
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	RONALD W SMITH	<b>Rated Power:</b>	450 hp
<b>Operator:</b>	RONALD W. SMITH	<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None
<b>Operator Does Business As:</b>	SMITH AIR, INC.	<b>Operator Designator Code:</b>	ETHA

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	RFD, 736 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	7 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	0808 CDT	Direction from Accident Site:	190°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 1700 ft agl	Visibility	15 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 3100 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	8 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	320°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	13° C / 13° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	KENOSHA, WI (ENW)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	ATLANTA, GA (ATL)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	0000	Type of Airspace:	Class G

## Wreckage and Impact Information

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

## Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	EDWARD J MCAVOY	Report Date:	08/08/1989
Additional Participating Persons:	L WILLS D BRIGHAM; WEST CHICAGO, IL R LUNA		
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 <a href="mailto:pubinq@ntsb.gov">pubinq@ntsb.gov</a> , or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at <a href="http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/">http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/</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](#).