



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	SPARKS, NV	Accident Number:	SEA89LA045
Date & Time:	01/31/1989, 2159 PST	Registration:	N88RG
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-31	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

DURING THE CLIMBOUT, IN NIGHT VISUAL METEOROLOGICAL CONDITIONS, THE AIRCRAFT LOST RIGHT ENGINE POWER. THE PILOT WAS INITIALLY CLEARED FOR ONE RUNWAY, BUT WAS UNABLE TO GET A SAFE GEAR INDICATION. THE PILOT MADE A 180 DEGREE TURN TO LAND ON THE OPPOSITE RUNWAY WHILE ATTEMPTING TO GET A SAFE GEAR INDICATION. ON TURN FROM BASE TO FINAL, WITH THE GEAR DOWN AND LOCKED, THE PILOT OVERSHOT FINAL APPROACH. THE PILOT THEN CHOSE AN UNLIT PARKING LOT TO MAKE AN OFF-AIRPORT LANDING. THE AIRCRAFT STRUCK A TREE AND A POWER LINE. THE AIRCRAFT STRUCK SEVERAL PARKED UNOCCUPIED VEHICLES DURING THE LANDING. THE FAA REPORTED THAT AN ON-SITE INSPECTION REVEALED A FAILED RIGHT TURBOCHARGER.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: THE PILOT'S MISJUDGEMENT OF THE FORCED LANDING PROFILE. CONTRIBUTING TO THE ACCIDENT WAS THE FAILURE OF THE RIGHT TURBOCHARGER AND THE PILOT'S IMPROPER HANDLING OF THE LANDING GEAR SYSTEM.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(PARTIAL) - MECH FAILURE/MALF
Phase of Operation: CLIMB

Findings

1. 1 ENGINE
 2. (F) EXHAUST SYSTEM,TURBOCHARGER - FAILURE,TOTAL
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Occurrence #2: AIRFRAME/COMPONENT/SYSTEM FAILURE/MALFUNCTION
Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - DOWNWIND

Findings

3. (F) LANDING GEAR,NORMAL RETRACTION/EXTENSION ASSEMBLY - IMPROPER
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Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: APPROACH

Findings

4. (F) LIGHT CONDITION - DARK NIGHT
 5. (C) PLANNED APPROACH - MISJUDGED - PILOT IN COMMAND
 6. (F) OBJECT - TREE(S)
 7. (F) OBJECT - WIRE,STATIC
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Occurrence #4: ON GROUND/WATER COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

8. OBJECT - VEHICLE

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	39, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	07/18/1987
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	2200 hours (Total, all aircraft), 200 hours (Total, this make and model), 30 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N88RG
Model/Series:	PA-31 PA-31	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	31-667
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	8
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	7800 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	TIO-540-A2C
Registered Owner:	RICARDT INVESTMENT, INC.	Rated Power:	310 hp
Operator:	RICARDT INVESTMENT, INC.	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Night/Dark
Observation Facility, Elevation:	RNO, 0 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	2 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	2223 PST	Direction from Accident Site:	350°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 6000 ft agl	Visibility	12 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 14000 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	4 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	240°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	8° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	RENO, NV (RNO)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	LONG BEACH, CA (LGB)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	2151 PST	Type of Airspace:	Class E

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Fire:	On-Ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	On-Ground
Total Injuries:	2 Serious	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	CANDACE C CARRERA	Report Date:	03/12/1990
Additional Participating Persons:	DAVID MILLER; RENO, NV		
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/ .		

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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](#).