

National Transportation Safety Board  
Washington, DC 20594

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Brief of Accident

Adopted 11/09/2009

ERA09LA266 File No. 25657	04/26/2009	San Juan, PR	Aircraft Reg No. N136FS	Time (Local): 04:15 EDT		
Make/Model:	Douglas / DC3			Fatal	Serious	Minor/None
Engine Make/Model:	P & W / R-1830-90D		Crew	0	0	4
Aircraft Damage:	Substantial		Pass	0	0	0
Number of Engines:	2					
Operating Certificate(s):	On-demand Air Taxi					
Name of Carrier:	Four Star Aviation Inc					
Type of Flight Operation:	Non-scheduled; Domestic; Cargo					
Reg. Flight Conducted Under:	Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter					
Last Depart. Point:	Same as Accident/Incident Location			Condition of Light:	Night	
Destination:	Charlotte Amali, VI			Weather Info Src:	Weather Observation Facility	
Airport Proximity:	On Airport/Airstrip			Basic Weather:	Visual Conditions	
Airport Name:	Luis Munoz Marin International			Lowest Ceiling:	None	
Runway Identification:	N/A			Visibility:	10.00 SM	
Runway Length/Width (Ft):	Unk/Nr			Wind Dir/Speed:	100 / 004 Kts	
Runway Surface:				Temperature (°C):	24	
Runway Surface Condition:				Precip/Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation	
Pilot-in-Command	Age: 69			Flight Time (Hours)		
Certificate(s)/Rating(s)				Total All Aircraft:	50233	
Airline Transport; Commercial; Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land				Last 90 Days:	150	
				Total Make/Model:	7000	
Instrument Ratings				Total Instrument Time:	10851	
Airplane						

\*\*\* Note: NTSB investigators may not have traveled in support of this investigation and used data provided by various sources to prepare this aircraft accident report. \*\*\*

During taxi to a runway, the instrument panel and cockpit floor erupted in flames. Examination of the wreckage revealed that the majority of the wires contained inside the main junction box had very little damage except for two wires that had insulation missing. The damage appeared to be associated with the routing of the two wires. Both wires were connected to the battery relay and ran through wires in and around the exposed terminal studs. Heat damage was noted on the insulation of wires and other components that were in contact with the exposed wires. The wires ran from the battery relay to the forward section of the cockpit, where the fire started. Due to the fire damage that consumed the cockpit, the examination was unable to determine what system the wires were associated with. Further examination revealed that the fuel pressure was a direct indicating system. Fuel traveled directly to the instruments in the cockpit via rigid aluminum lines routed on the right lower side of the fuselage, where more severe fire damage was noted. Review of maintenance records did not reveal any evidence of the fuel pressure indicating system lines and hoses having ever been replaced; however, they were only required to be replaced on an as-needed basis. The electrical system, instrument lines, and hoses through the nose compartment were required to be inspected on a Phase D inspection; the airplane's last Phase D inspection was completed about 9 months prior to the accident and the airplane had accrued 313.1 hours of operation since that inspection.

Updated at Nov 21 2009 2:00PM

Brief of Accident (Continued)

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OCCURRENCES

Taxi-to runway - Fire/smoke (non-impact)

FINDINGS

Aircraft-Aircraft systems-Electrical power system-(general)-Damaged/degraded - C  
Aircraft-Aircraft systems-Fuel system-Fuel indication system-Damaged/degraded - C  
Aircraft-Fluids/misc hardware-Misc hardware-Hoses and tubes-Not specified

Findings Legend: (C) = Cause, (F) = Factor

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The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:  
Worn electrical wires and a fuel pressure indicating system hose, which resulted in a ground fire during taxi.