

Brief of Accident

Adopted 04/10/2013

ANC12FA009
 File No. 31013 11/29/2011 Chuathbaluk, AK Aircraft Reg No. N1673U Time (Local): 19:25 AST

Make/Model:	Cessna / 207	Fatal	Serious	Minor/None
Engine Make/Model:	Cont Motor / IO 520 SERIES	Crew	1	0
Aircraft Damage:	Substantial	Pass	0	0
Number of Engines:	1			
Operating Certificate(s):	On-demand Air Taxi			
Type of Flight Operation:	Positioning			
Reg. Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation			

Last Depart. Point:	Aniak, AK	Condition of Light:	Night/Dark
Destination:	Same as Accident/Incident Location	Weather Info Src:	Weather Observation Facility
Airport Proximity:	Off Airport/Airstrip	Basic Weather:	Visual Conditions
		Lowest Ceiling:	3600 Ft. AGL, Overcast
		Visibility:	4.00 SM
		Wind Dir/Speed:	350 / 006 Kts
		Temperature (°C):	-18
		Precip/Obscuration:	

Pilot-in-Command	Age: 61	Flight Time (Hours)
Certificate(s)/Rating(s)		Total All Aircraft: 10000
Commercial; Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land; Single-engine Sea		Last 90 Days: Unk/Nr
Instrument Ratings		Total Make/Model: Unk/Nr
Airplane		Total Instrument Time: Unk/Nr

*** Note: NTSB investigators either traveled in support of this investigation or conducted a significant amount of investigative work without any travel, and used data obtained from various sources to prepare this aircraft accident report. ***

The pilot departed on a positioning flight during dark night, marginal visual meteorological conditions. A witness, who was waiting for the airplane at the destination airport, stated that shortly after the pilot-controlled airport lighting activated, a snow squall passed over the airport, greatly reducing the visibility. The accident airplane never arrived at its destination, and a search was initiated. The airplane's fragmented wreckage was discovered early the next morning in a wooded area, about 2 miles from its destination.

A review of archived automatic dependent surveillance-broadcast (ADS-B) data received from the accident airplane showed that the pilot departed, and the airplane climbed to about 700 feet above ground level. The airplane remained at about 700 feet for about 3 minutes, and then entered a shallow right-hand descending turn, until it impacted terrain.

On-site examination of the airplane and engine revealed no preaccident mechanical anomalies that would have precluded normal operation. The cockpit area was extensively fragmented, thus the validity of any postaccident cockpit and instrument findings was unreliable. Likewise, structural damage to the airframe precluded the determination of flight control continuity. A postaccident examination of the engine and recovered components did not disclose any evidence of a mechanical malfunction.

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Given the witness account of worsening weather conditions at the airport just before the accident and the lack of mechanical anomalies with the airplane, it is likely that the accident pilot encountered heavy snow and instrument meteorological conditions while approaching the airport. It is also likely that the pilot became spatially disoriented during the unexpected weather encounter and subsequently collided with terrain.

Updated at Apr 10 2013 10:06AM

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OCCURRENCES

Enroute - VFR encounter with IMC
Enroute - Loss of visual reference
Enroute - Controlled flight into terr/obj (CFIT)

FINDINGS

Personnel issues-Task performance-Use of equip/info-Aircraft control-Pilot - C
Environmental issues-Conditions/weather/phenomena-Ceiling/visibility/precip-Below VFR minima-Contributed to outcome
Personnel issues-Psychological-Perception/orientation/illusio-Situational awareness-Pilot - C

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

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

The pilot's loss of situational awareness after an inadvertent encounter with instrument meteorological conditions, which resulted in an in-flight collision with tree-covered terrain.