



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

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|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| <b>Location:</b>               | DELTA, UT                            | <b>Accident Number:</b> | DEN82FA020 |
| <b>Date &amp; Time:</b>        | 01/17/1982, 1435 MST                 | <b>Registration:</b>    | N91TW      |
| <b>Aircraft:</b>               | PIPER PA-31T                         | <b>Aircraft Damage:</b> | Destroyed  |
| <b>Defining Event:</b>         |                                      | <b>Injuries:</b>        | 3 Minor    |
| <b>Flight Conducted Under:</b> | Part 91: General Aviation - Personal |                         |            |

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## Analysis

APPROXIMATELY 1/2 MI FROM THE ARPT AFTER TAKEOFF, THE PLT NOTICED THE LEFT FRONT BAGGAGE DOOR PARTLY OPEN & MADE A LEFT TURN BACK TOWARD THE AIRSTRIIP. AFTER THE TURN, THE BAGGAGE DOOR CAME COMPLETELY OPEN, THE LEFT WING DROPPED IMMEDIATELY & THE ACFT STALLED. THE PLT ADDED FULL POWER & LOWERED THE NOSE. WHEN HE RAISED THE NOSE NEAR THE GROUND, THE ACFT SHUDDERED & CRASHED. TWO RESCUE PERSONNEL, BOTH CERTIFICATED PILOTS, ARRIVED SHORTLY AFTER THE ACCIDENT & FOUND THE NOSE BAGGAGE DOOR IN THE UNLOCKED POSITION WITH THE BAYONET PINS RETRACTED. A PIPER REPRESENTATIVE STATED THAT IF THE LEFT SIDE NOSE BAGGAGE DOOR OF A PA-31T OPENED IN FLT THERE WOULD BE THE LIKELIHOOD OF AN INTERRUPTION TO THE SMOOTH AIRFLOW THROUGH THE PROP, POSSIBLY REDUCING THE THRUST PRODUCED BY THE BLADES.

## Probable Cause and Findings

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

## Findings

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Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT

Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING - TURN TO LANDING AREA (EMERGENCY)

### Findings

1. (F) DOOR,CARGO/BAGGAGE - UNLOCKED
2. (F) AIRCRAFT PREFLIGHT - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (F) DOOR,CARGO/BAGGAGE - OPEN
4. (F) PRECAUTIONARY LANDING - PERFORMED - PILOT IN COMMAND
5. (F) AIRCRAFT PERFORMANCE - DETERIORATED
6. (C) AIRSPEED - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
7. STALL - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND

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Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING - TURN TO LANDING AREA (EMERGENCY)

## Factual Information

### Pilot Information

|                           |  |                                   |            |
|---------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Certificate:              | Private  | Age:                              | 55, Male   |
| Airplane Rating(s):       | Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land                                    | Seat Occupied:                    | Unknown    |
| Other Aircraft Rating(s): |  | Restraint Used:                   |            |
| Instrument Rating(s):     | Airplane   | Second Pilot Present:             | No         |
| Instructor Rating(s):     | None   | Toxicology Performed:             |            |
| Medical Certification:    | Class 3 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.                                   | Last FAA Medical Exam:            | 04/28/1980 |
| Occupational Pilot:       |  | Last Flight Review or Equivalent: |            |
| Flight Time:              | 4000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 520 hours (Total, this make and model) |                                   |            |

### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

|                               |                        |                                |              |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Aircraft Make:                | PIPER                  | Registration:                  | N91TW        |
| Model/Series:                 | PA-31T PA-31T          | Aircraft Category:             | Airplane     |
| Year of Manufacture:          |                        | Amateur Built:                 | No           |
| Airworthiness Certificate:    |                        | Serial Number:                 | 31T-7820078  |
| Landing Gear Type:            | Retractable - Tricycle | Seats:                         | 8            |
| Date/Type of Last Inspection: | Unknown                | Certified Max Gross Wt.:       | 6500 lbs     |
| Time Since Last Inspection:   | 49 Hours               | Engines:                       | 2 Turbo Prop |
| Airframe Total Time:          | 340 Hours              | Engine Manufacturer:           | P & W        |
| ELT:                          | Installed              | Engine Model/Series:           | PT6A-28      |
| Registered Owner:             | DERRAL CHRISTENSEN     | Rated Power:                   | 620 hp       |
| Operator:                     | DERRAL CHRISTENSEN     | Operating Certificate(s) Held: |              |

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

|                                  |                          |   |                  |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|---|------------------|
| Conditions at Accident Site:     | Visual Conditions        | Condition of Light:                     | Day              |
| Observation Facility, Elevation: | DTA, 0 ft msl            | Distance from Accident Site:            | 1 Nautical Miles |
| Observation Time:                | 1400                     | Direction from Accident Site:           | 270°             |
| Lowest Cloud Condition:          | Scattered / 12000 ft agl | Visibility                              | 50 Miles         |
| Lowest Ceiling:                  | Unknown / 0 ft agl       | Visibility (RVR):                       | 0 ft             |
| Wind Speed/Gusts:                | 8 knots /                | Turbulence Type<br>Forecast/Actual:     | /                |
| Wind Direction:                  | 220°                     | Turbulence Severity<br>Forecast/Actual: | /                |
| Altimeter Setting:               |                          | Temperature/Dew Point:                  | 50° C / 0° C     |
| Precipitation and Obscuration:   |                          |   |                  |
| Departure Point:                 | DELTA, UT                | Type of Flight Plan Filed:              | IFR              |
| Destination:                     | LAS VEGAS, NV (LAS)      | Type of Clearance:                      | None             |
| Departure Time:                  | 1430                     | Type of Airspace:                       |                  |

## Wreckage and Impact Information

|                     |         |                      |           |
|---------------------|---------|----------------------|-----------|
| Crew Injuries:      | 1 Minor | Aircraft Damage:     | Destroyed |
| Passenger Injuries: | 2 Minor | Aircraft Fire:       | On-Ground |
| Ground Injuries:    | N/A     | Aircraft Explosion:  | On-Ground |
| Total Injuries:     | 3 Minor | Latitude, Longitude: |           |

## Administrative Information

|                                   |  |            |
|-----------------------------------|--|------------|
| Investigator In Charge (IIC):     | Report Date:   | 01/17/1983 |
| Additional Participating Persons: |  |            |
| 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:pubinquiry@ntsb.gov">pubinquiry@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> . |            |

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](#).