



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	ASPEN, CO	Accident Number:	DEN83FA059
Date & Time:	02/15/1983, 0813 MST	Registration:	N33340
Aircraft:	CESSNA 340A	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	4 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

PRIOR TO DEPARTURE THE FLT WAS GIVEN AN IFR CLEARANCE WHICH BEGAN AT HERLS INTERSECTION (16 MI NNE) & TO CROSS HERLS AT OR ABOVE 16,000 FT MSL. DEPARTURE ARPT FIELD ELEV IS 7,793 FT. FLTS ARE REQUIRED TO PROCEED VFR TO THE INITIAL FIX OF THE IFR CLEARANCE. AFTER TAKEOFF THE ACFT WAS OBSERVED HEADING NE TOWARD THE MOUNTAINS. ACFT DEPARTING ASPEN USUALLY FLYA NORTHERN HEADING, THEN TURN NE AFTER CLEARING THE MOUNTAINS. WITNESSES STATED THAT THE WEATHER WAS GOOD IN THE VALLEY NORTH OF THE ARPT, BUT THE MOUNTAIN TOPS EAST OF THE ARPT WERE OBSCURED BY LOW CLOUDS. THE ACFT CRASHED 3-1/2 MI NE OF THE ARPT AT THE 9,000 FT LEVEL OF AN 11,000 FT MOUNTAIN. THE LAST TIME THE PLT HAD FLOWN INTO ASPEN WAS IN 1980.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER

Phase of Operation: CLIMB - TO CRUISE

Findings

1. (C) PREFLIGHT PLANNING/PREPARATION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (C) VFR PROCEDURES - NOT FOLLOWED - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (F) LACK OF FAMILIARITY WITH GEOGRAPHIC AREA - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - CLOUDS
5. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - OBSCURATION
6. (C) VFR FLIGHT INTO IMC - CONTINUED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: CLIMB - TO CRUISE

Findings

7. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - HIGH TERRAIN
8. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - MOUNTAINOUS/HILLY
9. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - RISING

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	61, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):		Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):		Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	04/21/1982
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	3193 hours (Total, all aircraft), 2624 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	CESSNA	Registration:	N33340
Model/Series:	340A 340A	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	340A0529
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	09/01/1982, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	5990 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	724 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	CONTINENTAL
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	TSIO-520-N
Registered Owner:	ROBERT M. MCCORMICK	Rated Power:	310 hp
Operator:	ROBERT M. MCCORMICK	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	ASE, 7793 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	3 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	0815 MST	Direction from Accident Site:	200°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 1500 ft agl	Visibility	20 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 3000 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	10 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	180°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	-1 °C / -9 °C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Destination:	SOUTH BEND, IN (4CO)	Type of Clearance:	Special VFR
Departure Time:	0813 MST	Type of Airspace:	Class D

Airport Information

Airport:	SARDY FIELD (ASE)	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	7793 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	33	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	6001 ft / 80 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	2 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	2 Fatal	Aircraft Fire:	On-Ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	On-Ground
Total Injuries:	4 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	R. G MUCHO	Report Date:	
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 pubinq@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](#).