



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	CALLAHAN, CA	Accident Number:	LAX86FA314
Date & Time:	08/06/1986, 1115 PDT	Registration:	N98998
Aircraft:	CESSNA 421C	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Fatal

Flight Conducted Under: Part 91: General Aviation - Executive/Corporate

Analysis

AFTER DROPPING COMPANY EXECUTIVES OFF AT MEDFORD, THE PILOT WAS TO RETURN TO SANTA ROSA EMPTY. WITNESSES ALONG THE 25 NM VALLEY WHICH ENDS AT THE ACCIDENT SITE REPORTED THAT THE AIRCRAFT BUZZED THEIR LOCATIONS AT AGL ALTITUDES VARIOUSLY DESCRIBED AS '10 FEET' AND 'SO LOW YOU COULD COUNT THE RIVETS.' US FOREST SVC PERSONNEL NEAR THE ACCIDENT SITE REPORTED THAT THE AIRCRAFT FLEW OVER THEIR POSITION 'JUST ABOVE THE TREES' FOLLOWING THE SLOPE OF THE MOUNTAIN UPWARD. THE ACCIDENT SITE IS ON A POPULAR HIKING TRAIL THE PILOT'S GIRLFRIEND REPORTEDLY SAID SHE WOULD LIKE TO VISIT. ON SITE EXAMINATION REVEALED THAT THE AIRCRAFT FIRST CONTACTED THE UPPER 5 FEET OF THE TREETOPS IN A CLIMB ATTITUDE. NO PREIMPACT FAILURES OF THE ACFT WERE IDENTIFIED.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT

Phase of Operation: CLIMB

Findings

1. OBJECT - TREE(S)
2. (C) IN-FLIGHT PLANNING/DECISION - POOR - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (F) OVERCONFIDENCE IN PERSONAL ABILITY - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (C) BUZZING - INTENTIONAL - PILOT IN COMMAND
5. (C) CLEARANCE - MISJUDGED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline Transport; Flight Instructor; Commercial	Age:	24, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane Multi-engine; Airplane Single-engine; Instrument Airplane	Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	05/02/1985
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	2440 hours (Total, all aircraft), 370 hours (Total, this make and model), 2275 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 30 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 11 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	CESSNA	Registration:	N98998
Model/Series:	421C 421C	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	421C0113
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	7
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	01/10/1986, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	7450 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	90 Hours	Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	2519 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	CONTINENTAL
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	GTS10-520-F-K
Registered Owner:	TELESITE CORPORATION	Rated Power:	375 hp
Operator:	TELESITE CORP.	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	105, 2527 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	30 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1048 PDT	Direction from Accident Site:	15°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear / 0 ft agl	Visibility	40 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None / 0 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	Calm /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	27° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	MEDFORD, OR (MFR)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	SANTA ROSA, CA (STS)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1017 PDT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	On-Ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	JEFF RICH	Report Date:	
Additional Participating Persons:	DAVID SMITH; SACRAMENTO, CA WILLIAM ROSS; WICHITA, KS R. S BOYLE; MOBILE, AL		
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/ .		

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](#).