



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	COCOA BEACH, FL	Accident Number:	MIA88LA236
Date & Time:	07/25/1988, 1729 EDT	Registration:	N69RB
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-60-700P	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Business		

Analysis

FLT ENTERED NEAR VERTICAL DESCENT WHILE FLYING IN AREA OF LEVEL 1 AND 2 THUNDERSTORMS JUST AFTER PLT HAD CALLED REQUESTING PERMISSION TO DEVIATE AROUND RAIN SHOWERS. A LEVEL 5 THUNDERSTORM WAS PRESENT 8 MILES WEST. THE ACFT DESCENDED AT RATES UP TO 13,800 FEET PER MINUTE. WITNESSES SAW ACFT EXIT BOTTOM OF CLOUDS AT APPROX 4,000 FEET IN A NEAR FLAT ATTITUDE AND ROTATING AROUND THE YAW AXIS TO THE LEFT. ENGINE SOUNDS INCREASED AND DECREASED AS THE ACFT ROTATED AND ALL COMPONENTS APPEARED TO BE PRESENT ON THE ACFT. NO SMOKE OR FLAME WAS VISIBLE. AT APPROX 500 FEET ABOVE THE WATER THE ROTATION STOPPED AND THE NOSE DROPPED TO A 30 TO 70 DEGREE NOSE DOWN ANGLE AND BOTH ENGINES COULD BE HEARD INCREASING IN POWER. BEFORE THE RECOVERY COULD BE COMPLETED THE ACFT STRUCK THE OCEAN.

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: CRUISE

Findings

1. WEATHER CONDITION - THUNDERSTORM, LEVEL II
2. (C) IN-FLIGHT PLANNING/DECISION - INADEQUATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. WEATHER CONDITION - TURBULENCE (THUNDERSTORMS)

Occurrence #2: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings

4. (C) FLIGHT INTO KNOWN ADVERSE WEATHER - NOT CORRECTED - PILOT IN COMMAND
5. (C) SPATIAL DISORIENTATION - PILOT IN COMMAND
6. (C) STALL/SPIN - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	45, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	07/19/1988
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	2150 hours (Total, all aircraft), 200 hours (Total, this make and model), 25 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N69RB
Model/Series:	PA-60-700P PA-60-700P	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	60-8423019
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	05/13/1988, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	6315 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	19 Hours	Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	506 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	TIO-540-U2A
Registered Owner:	RICHARD L BIRD	Rated Power:	350 hp
Operator:	ROGERS, ROBERT H.	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	COF, 9 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	1 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1729 EDT	Direction from Accident Site:	260°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 800 ft agl	Visibility	6 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 10000 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	Calm /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	27° C / 24° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	STUART, FL (SUA)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Destination:	WASHINGTON, DC (DCA)	Type of Clearance:	IFR
Departure Time:	1703 EDT	Type of Airspace:	Class E

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	JEFFREY L KENNEDY	Report Date:	01/04/1990
Additional Participating Persons:	GERALD WILKE; ORLANDO, FL		
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 pubinquiry@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](#).