



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	CEDAR CITY, UT	Accident Number:	DEN90FA100
Date & Time:	04/25/1990, 2230 MDT	Registration:	N18PP
Aircraft:	PIPER PA31-325	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	4 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

THE PILOT REPORTED TO ATC THAT HE INTENDED TO MAKE AN UNSCHEDULED FUEL STOP. ATC ADVISED THAT CEDAR CITY AIRPORT WAS FIFTEEN MINUTES AWAY. RADAR VECTORS WERE REQUESTED AND WERE ISSUED. ALTHOUGH DARK NIGHT CONDITIONS EXISTED AND THE PILOT CONTROLLED AIRPORT LIGHTING WAS NEVER ACTIVATED, THE PILOT REPORTED THE AIRPORT IN SIGHT AND WAS CLEARED FOR A VISUAL APPROACH. THREE MINUTES LATER RADAR CONTACT WAS LOST. IMPACT OCCURRED IN MOUNTAINOUS TERRAIN AT 9,100 FEET ELEVATION ABOUT SIX MILES EAST OF THE 5,622 FOOT ELEVATION AIRPORT. MINIMUM SAFE ALTITUDE WAS 12,400 FEET.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: THE PILOT FAILED TO MAINTAIN A MINIMUM SAFE ALTITUDE OVER MOUNTAINOUS TERRAIN DURING A NIGHT VFR APPROACH FOR LANDING.

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: APPROACH

Findings

1. TERRAIN CONDITION - MOUNTAINOUS/HILLY
2. BECAME LOST/DISORIENTED - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) PROPER ALTITUDE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (F) LIGHT CONDITION - DARK NIGHT

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	54, 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):	None	Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	12/22/1989
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	2000 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N18PP
Model/Series:	PA31-325 PA31-325	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	51-7512046
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	01/12/1990, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	6500 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	40 Hours	Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	2260 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, activated, aided in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	TIO-540-F2BD
Registered Owner:	N18PP INC A DELAWARE CORP.	Rated Power:	325 hp
Operator:	18PP, INC.	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Night/Dark
Observation Facility, Elevation:	CDC, 5622 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	6 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	2250 MDT	Direction from Accident Site:	90°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear / 0 ft agl	Visibility	15 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None / 0 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	140°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	7° C / -2° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	DENVER, CO (DEN)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Destination:	RENO, NV (RNO)	Type of Clearance:	IFR
Departure Time:	1917 MDT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	CEDAR CITY MUNIC. (CDC)	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	5622 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	3 Fatal	Aircraft Fire:	On-Ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	4 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	VERLIN B TRANTER	Report Date:	09/21/1992
Additional Participating Persons:	THOMAS GIERHART CHARLES LITTLE; CHINO, CA PAUL LEHMAN; VERO BEACH, 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](#).