



# National Transportation Safety Board

## Aviation Accident Final Report

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<b>Location:</b>	FLAGSTAFF, AZ	<b>Accident Number:</b>	LAX90FA331
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	09/21/1990, 0545 MST	<b>Registration:</b>	N3558
<b>Aircraft:</b>	PIPER PA-31-350	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter - Non-scheduled		

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## Analysis

THE ACFT WAS ON A NIGHT FLT FM PHOENIX TO FLAGSTAFF, AZ, TO DELIVER CARGO IN ACCORDANCE WITH AN AIR TAXI DELIVERY SCHEDULE. BFR REACHING FLAGSTAFF, THE PLT CANCELED HIS IFR CLNC & PROCEEDED VFR. HE ENCTR'D LOWERING CIGS & RW. DRG THE APCH, HE EXTENDED THE LNDG GEAR & PARTIALLY EXTENDED THE WING FLAPS. SUBSEQUENTLY, THE ACFT HIT TREES & CRASHED IN AN UNPOPULATED AREA ABT 2.5 MI SSE OF THE ARPT AT AN ELEV OF ABT 6800 FT; ARPT ELEV WAS 7011 FT. INITIAL IMPACT OCCURRED WHILE THE ACFT WAS IN A RIGHT 20 DEG BANK (TOWARD RWY 3). WX DATA AT THE COMPANY DISPATCH WAS NOT CURRENT & DID NOT DEPICT THE ADVERSE LOCAL CONDS NEAR THE DESTN ARPT.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: VFR FLIGHT BY THE PILOT INTO INSTRUMENT METEOROLOGICAL CONDITIONS (IMC), AND HIS FAILURE TO MAINTAIN PROPER ALTITUDE DURING THE APPROACH TO LAND. FACTORS RELATED TO THE ACCIDENT WERE: DARKNESS, THE ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS, AND FAILURE OF COMPANY/OPERATOR/MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL TO PROVIDE CURRENT WEATHER.

## Findings

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Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER

Phase of Operation: APPROACH

### Findings

1. (F) LIGHT CONDITION - DARK NIGHT
2. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - LOW CEILING
3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - RAIN
4. (F) UPDATING OF RECORDED WEATHER INFORMATION - INADEQUATE - COMPANY/OPERATOR MANAGEMENT
5. (C) VFR FLIGHT INTO IMC - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND

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Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: APPROACH

### Findings

6. (C) PROPER ALTITUDE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

## Factual Information

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Airline Transport	<b>Age:</b>	57, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	Shoulder harness
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	Yes
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 2 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	04/09/1990
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>		
<b>Flight Time:</b>	5000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 2500 hours (Total, this make and model), 75 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 33 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	PIPER	<b>Registration:</b>	N3558
<b>Model/Series:</b>	PA-31-350 PA-31-350	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	No
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	31-8052072
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Retractable - Tricycle	<b>Seats:</b>	2
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	08/12/1990, Annual	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	7000 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	46 Hours	<b>Engines:</b>	2 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	5293 Hours	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	LYCOMING
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed, not activated	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	TIO-540-J2BD
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	MITROVICH P. EDRAG	<b>Rated Power:</b>	350 hp
<b>Operator:</b>	P.M. AIR	<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	On-demand Air Taxi (135)
<b>Operator Does Business As:</b>		<b>Operator Designator Code:</b>	EKDA

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument Conditions	Condition of Light:	Night/Dark
Observation Facility, Elevation:	FLG, 7011 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	2 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	0546 MST	Direction from Accident Site:	330°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 1800 ft agl	Visibility	1 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 2500 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	9 knots / 14 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	120°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	9°C / 5°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	PHOENIX, AZ (PHX)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	Company VFR
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	0506 MST	Type of Airspace:	Class G

## Airport Information

Airport:	FLAGSTAFF (FLG)	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	7011 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Wet
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	
Runway Length/Width:	6999 ft / 150 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	

## 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):	WAYNE POLLACK	Report Date:	03/31/1993
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:pubinq@ntsb.gov">pubinq@ntsb.gov</a> , or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at <a href="http://dms.ntsb.gov/pubdms/">http://dms.ntsb.gov/pubdms/</a> .		

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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](#).