



# National Transportation Safety Board

## Aviation Accident Final Report

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<b>Location:</b>	Aniak, AK	<b>Accident Number:</b>	ANC08LA032
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	01/16/2008, 1215 AST	<b>Registration:</b>	N1701U
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Cessna 207	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Serious
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>		Part 91: General Aviation - Positioning	

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## Analysis

The commercial certificated pilot was returning from a remote village after a round robin flight of about 130 miles over a frozen and snow-covered river. He was in cruise flight about 500 feet agl, but then circled while holding between 6 or 7 miles east of his destination airport, awaiting a special VFR (SVFR) clearance. The weather condition in that area was about 1 mile visibility, with a ceiling of about 1,000 feet agl. After receiving his SVFR clearance, the pilot flew toward the airport, but the engine fuel pressure began fluctuating. The engine rpm began decreasing, along with the airplane's altitude. The pilot switched fuel tanks, selected full flaps, and prepared for a forced landing. He said the weather was near white-out conditions, but he could see the bank of the river. After switching fuel tanks from the left to the right tank, the engine power suddenly returned to full power. He applied forward flight control pressure to prevent the airplane from climbing too fast, but the airplane collided with the surface of the river. The airplane sustained structural damage to the wings and fuselage. At the time of the accident, the ceiling at the airport was 600 feet obscured, with a visibility of 1/2 mile in snow. Neither the fuel status of the accident airplane, nor the mechanical condition of the engine, were verified by either the NTSB or FAA.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: A partial loss of engine power for an undetermined reason. Contributing to the accident were the pilot's inadvertent encounter with IMC conditions, and a whiteout during his attempted go-around from an emergency landing approach.

## Findings

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Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER(PARTIAL) - NONMECHANICAL  
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

### Findings

1. (C) REASON FOR OCCURRENCE UNDETERMINED

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Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING  
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY DESCENT/LANDING

### Findings

2. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - WHITEOUT
3. EMERGENCY PROCEDURE - INITIATED - PILOT IN COMMAND

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Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER  
Phase of Operation: GO-AROUND (VFR)

### Findings

4. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - SNOW COVERED
5. GO-AROUND - ATTEMPTED - PILOT IN COMMAND
6. (F) VFR FLIGHT INTO IMC - INADVERTENT - PILOT IN COMMAND

## Factual Information

On January 16, 2008, about 1215 Alaska Standard time, a Cessna 207 airplane, N1701U, sustained substantial damage when it collided with a snow and ice covered river following a partial loss of engine power, about 1 mile east of Aniak, Alaska. The airplane was being operated as a visual flight rules (VFR) cross-country positioning flight under Title 14, CFR Part 91, when the accident occurred. The airplane was operated by Inland Aviation Services Inc., Aniak. The commercial certificated pilot, the sole occupant, received serious injuries. Instrument meteorological conditions prevailed in the area of the accident. VFR company flight following procedures were in effect. The flight originated at the Crooked Creek Airport, Crooked Creek, Alaska, about 1130.

During a telephone conversation with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigator-in-charge (IIC), on January 16, the director of maintenance for the operator reported that the pilot received a special VFR (SVFR) clearance into the Aniak Class E airspace about 1153, and was following the Kuskokwim River from Crooked Creek to Aniak. About 1225, the pilot made radio contact with another airplane, and reported that he had crashed.

At the time of the accident, the surface of the Kuskokwim River was frozen and covered by snow.

In a telephone conversation with the NTSB IIC, on January 17, the pilot reported that he initially departed Aniak with full fuel tanks for Crooked Creek, which is about 65 miles from Aniak, along the Kuskokwim river. During the entire flight to and from Crooked Creek, the airplane had been flown between 45 to 60 minutes with the fuel selector on the left tank. The pilot said he was in cruise flight about 500 feet agl, but then circled while holding, about 6 or 7 miles east of Aniak, awaiting a special VFR (SVFR) clearance. The weather condition in that area was about 1 mile visibility, with a ceiling of about 1,000 feet agl. After receiving his SVFR clearance, the pilot proceeded toward Aniak, but the engine fuel pressure began fluctuating, about 3 miles from Aniak. The engine rpm began decreasing, along with his altitude. He switched the fuel selector from the left tank to the right, selected full flaps, and prepared for a forced landing. He said the weather was near white-out conditions, but he could see the bank of the river. After switching fuel tanks, the engine power suddenly returned to full power. He applied forward flight control pressure to prevent the airplane from climbing too fast, but the airplane collided with the surface of the river. The airplane sustained structural damage to the wings and fuselage. The total distance along the Kuskokwim River from Aniak, to Crooked Creek and back, was about 130 miles.

At 1156, an automated weather report at Aniak was reporting, in part: Wind, 200 degrees (true) at 6 knots; visibility, 1 statute mile; clouds and sky condition, 600 feet broken, 1,800 feet broken, 12,000 feet overcast; temperature, 32 degrees F; dew point, 30 degrees F; altimeter, 29.77 inHg.

At 1216, the weather at Aniak was reported as: Wind, 190 degrees (true) at 5 knots; visibility, 1/2 statute mile; clouds and sky condition, 600 feet overcast; temperature, 32 degrees F; dew point, 30 degrees F; altimeter, 29.79 inHg.

In the Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident Report (NTSB Form 6120.1) submitted by the director of maintenance for the operator, the ceiling was reported as 600 feet obscured, and the visibility was restricted by snow. No narrative description of the accident events was included

in the accident report form.

The fuel status of the airplane at the time of the accident, nor the mechanical condition of the engine, was verified by an NTSB investigator, or a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) inspector.

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	58, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine Land; Single-engine Sea	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 2 With Waivers/Limitations	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	07/01/2007
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>		<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	03/01/2007
<b>Flight Time:</b>	9455 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1914 hours (Total, this make and model), 40 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 15 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Cessna	<b>Registration:</b>	N1701U
<b>Model/Series:</b>	207	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	No
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	20700301
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Tricycle	<b>Seats:</b>	6
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	10/01/2007, Annual	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	3800 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	94 Hours	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	18448 Hours at time of accident	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Continental
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	IO-520
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	Inland Holdings Inc.	<b>Rated Power:</b>	300 hp
<b>Operator:</b>	Inland Aviation Services Inc.	<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	On-demand Air Taxi (135)
<b>Operator Does Business As:</b>		<b>Operator Designator Code:</b>	B7TA

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	PANI, 88 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	1 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1216 AST	Direction from Accident Site:	260°
Lowest Cloud Condition:		Visibility	0.5 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:		Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	190°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29.79 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	0°C / -1°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:		Snow	
Departure Point:	Crooked Creek, AK (CJX)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	Company VFR
Destination:	Aniak, AK (PANI)	Type of Clearance:	Special VFR
Departure Time:	1130 AST	Type of Airspace:	

## Airport Information

Airport:	Aniak (PANI)	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	88 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	NA	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	Forced Landing

## Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Serious	Latitude, Longitude:	61.581667, -159.541667

## Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Scott Erickson	Report Date:	08/28/2008
Additional Participating Persons:	Stan Bernard; FAA-AL-ANC FSDO 03; Anchorage, AK		
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> .		

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](#).