



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

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<b>Location:</b>	Crooked Creek, AK	<b>Accident Number:</b>	ANC01LA034
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	01/31/2001, 1315 AST	<b>Registration:</b>	N4390F
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Douglas DC-6B	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	3 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 125: 20+ Pax,6000+ lbs		

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## Analysis

The certificated airline transport captain related that the purpose of the flight was to deliver about 4,800 gallons of fuel oil to the remote mining site. He said that the 5,400 feet long by 100 feet wide airstrip was situated within hilly, snow-covered terrain. He added that the airstrip has a 7 percent uphill grade. Flat light conditions existed at the airstrip, and light snow showers were present, with visibility reported at 2 miles. The captain stated that during final approach, as the airplane passed over the airstrip threshold, flat light conditions made it very difficult to discern where the airstrip surface was. He said that the initial touch down was "firm", but was thought to be within acceptable tolerances. Just after touchdown, the left wing broke free from the airplane at the wing to fuselage attach point. The airplane veered to the left, and off the left side of the runway. The captain said that the airplane's computed landing weight was 92,260 pounds.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The flight crew's misjudged flare while landing. Factors associated with the accident were flat light conditions, snow-covered terrain, and an uphill runway grade.

## Findings

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Occurrence #1: HARD LANDING

Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

1. (F) LIGHT CONDITION - OTHER
2. (C) FLARE - MISJUDGED - FLIGHTCREW
3. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - SNOW COVERED
4. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - UPHILL

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Occurrence #2: AIRFRAME/COMPONENT/SYSTEM FAILURE/MALFUNCTION

Phase of Operation: LANDING - FLARE/TOUCHDOWN

Findings

5. WING - SEPARATION

## Factual Information

On January 31, 2001, about 1315 Alaska standard time, a Douglas DC-6B airplane, N4390F, sustained substantial damage during landing at the Donlin Creek Airstrip, a remote mine site located about 12 miles north of Crooked Creek, Alaska. The airplane was being operated as a visual flight rules (VFR) cargo flight under Title 14, CFR Part 125, when the accident occurred. The airplane was registered to and operated by Everts Air Fuel, Inc., Fairbanks, Alaska. The two certificated airline transport pilots, and the flight engineer, were not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and a visual flight rules (VFR) flight plan was in effect. The flight originated at the Fairbanks International Airport, Fairbanks, about 1130.

During a telephone conversation with the National Transportation Safety Board investigator-in-charge on February 2, the captain related that the purpose of the flight was to deliver about 4,800 gallons of fuel oil to the remote mining site. He said that the 5,400 feet long by 100 feet wide airstrip was situated within hilly, snow-covered terrain. He added that the airstrip has a 7 percent uphill grade. Flat light conditions existed at the airstrip, and light snow showers were present, with visibility reported at 2 miles. The captain stated that during final approach, as the airplane passed over the airstrip threshold, flat light conditions made it very difficult to discern where the airstrip surface was. He said that the initial touch down was "firm", but was thought to be within acceptable tolerances. Just after touchdown, the left wing broke free from the airplane at the wing to fuselage attach point. The airplane veered to the left, and off the left side of the runway.

The captain said that the airplane's computed landing weight was 92,260 pounds.

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Airline Transport	<b>Age:</b>	58, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Multi-engine Land; 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>	Yes
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 1 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	12/18/2000
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>		<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	10/31/2000
<b>Flight Time:</b>	29500 hours (Total, all aircraft), 8100 hours (Total, this make and model), 29000 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 263 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 71 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 6 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

## Co-Pilot Information

Certificate:	Age:	31, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
Instrument Rating(s):	Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:		

## Flight Engineer Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Flight Engineer	Age:	26, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Unknown
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane Single-engine	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Unknown	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:			

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Douglas	Registration:	N4390F
Model/Series:	DC-6B	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Transport	Serial Number:	44898
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	01/24/2001, AAIP	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	103800 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	33.5 Hours	Engines:	4 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	37052.7 Hours at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	P&W
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	R2800-CB
Registered Owner:	Cliford R. Everts	Rated Power:	2400 hp
Operator:	Everts Air Fuel, Inc.	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	EVAB

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:		Visibility	2 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 2000 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	Calm /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Fairbanks, AK (FAI)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	VFR
Destination:	Crooked Creek, AK	Type of Clearance:	VFR
Departure Time:	1130 AST	Type of Airspace:	Class E

## Airport Information

Airport:	Donlin Creek Airstrip	Runway Surface Type:	Gravel; Snow
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	Snow--dry
Runway Used:	11	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	5400 ft / 150 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Full Stop

## Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	3 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 None	Latitude, Longitude:	62.333333, -158.216667

## Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Clinton O Johnson	Report Date:	02/20/2002
Additional Participating Persons:	James B Porter; Federal Aviation Administration; Fairbanks, 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.nts.gov/pubdms/">http://dms.nts.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](#).