



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	Penn Yan, NY	Accident Number:	ANC08LA010
Date & Time:	10/28/2007, 1330 EDT	Registration:	N717SB
Aircraft:	Piper 601P	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The private pilot was continuing a cross-country flight after having stopped for fuel. About 20 minutes into the flight, the pilot said both engines started running rough, and he turned the airplane toward the nearest airport and descended. The pilot reported that he did not think the airplane would make it to the airport, and that due to the rugged terrain, he felt it was better to ditch the airplane in a large lake he was flying over. The pilot reported there were no mechanical anomalies prior to the loss of engine power. He said he felt that fuel contamination was the cause of the engine problem, and that not fueling during heavy rain might have prevented the problem. Fuel samples were taken from the fuel supply where he added fuel, and the equipment used to fuel the airplane. No other instances of fuel contamination were reported, and according to the FAA inspector the fuel samples were tested, and found to be clean. The airplane was not recovered from the lake, and has not been examined by the NTSB.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The loss of engine power during cruise flight for an undetermined reason.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER
Phase of Operation: CRUISE - NORMAL

Findings

1. (C) REASON FOR OCCURRENCE UNDETERMINED

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

Factual Information

On October 28, 2007 about 1330 eastern daylight time, a twin-engine Piper 601P airplane, N717SB, sustained substantial damage during a ditching in a freshwater lake, following a loss of power in both engines during normal cruise, about 7 miles east of Penn Yan, New York. The airplane was being operated by the pilot as a visual flight rules (VFR) personal cross-country flight under Title 14, CFR Part 91, when the accident occurred. The solo private certificated pilot was not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed. The airplane departed the Rochester Airport, New York, about 1310.

According to information received from an aviation safety inspector who spoke with the pilot, the pilot landed in Rochester, and refueled the airplane for the continuation of the cross-country flight. After departure, the pilot reported climbing to 5,000 feet where both engines began to run rough. The pilot turned the airplane toward what he thought was the nearest airport at Penn Yan, and descended below the clouds to about 1,500 feet. The pilot reported that he did not think the airplane would make it to the airport, and that due to the rugged terrain, he felt it was better to ditch the airplane in the large lake he was flying over. After ditching, the pilot was able to deploy a life raft he had aboard the airplane. The depth of the lake is estimated to be about 600 feet. The pilot reported there were no mechanical anomalies prior to the loss of engine power.

In a written statement dated October 28, the pilot reiterated what he had told the FAA inspector. He said he felt that fuel contamination was the cause of the engine problem, and that not fueling during heavy rain might have prevented the problem.

Fuel samples were taken from the fuel supply where he added fuel, and the equipment used to fuel the airplane. No other instances of fuel contamination were reported, and according to the FAA inspector, the fuel samples were tested, and found to be clean.

The airplane was not recovered from the lake, and has not been examined by the NTSB.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	55, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 With Waivers/Limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	03/01/2007
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	09/01/2007
Flight Time:	2413 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1683 hours (Total, this make and model), 2413 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 50 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 26 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N717SB
Model/Series:	601P	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	61P-0808-8063418
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	12/01/2006, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	6300 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	2619 Hours as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	TIO-540-U2A
Registered Owner:	Alexander Gray	Rated Power:	350 hp
Operator:	Alexander Gray	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KPEO, 990 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	8 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1253	Direction from Accident Site:	60°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 4400 ft agl	Visibility	10 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 6500 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	10 knots / 18 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	270°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.41 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	9°C / 0°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Rochester, NY (ROC)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	Unknown
Destination:	Danbury, CT (DXR)	Type of Clearance:	
Departure Time:	EDT	Type of Airspace:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	42.719444, -76.941111

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Lawrence R Lewis **Report Date:** 04/30/2008

Additional Participating Persons: John Liccini; FAA Rochester, New York; Rochester, NY

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 pubinq@ntsb.gov, or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at <http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/>.

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](#).