

"This accident was investigated to provide guidance toward the prevention of a recurrence. The content of this report is confined to cause-related circumstances and is published for accident prevention purposes only".

P90089

Britten Norman BN2A-26

CF-ZVV

DATE: 18 September 1979 1130 local time
OPERATION: Specific Point DAMAGE: Destroyed
PLACE: 8 mi E of Beaver Cove, B.C. 50/29N 126/39W
LOCALE: Tree covered mountain 1200' asl
WEATHER: Wind calm, vis 0, sky obscured with fog
PILOT: Commercial
TOTAL HOURS: 3000 ALL Unknown ON TYPE
LAST 90 DAYS: 150 ALL 100 ON TYPE
CASUALTIES: Crew: 1 fatal; pass: 3 fatal, 5 serious
OCCURRENCE: Pacific Coastal Airlines Flight 850 was on a scheduled VFR flight from Cassidy airport to Port Hardy with a stop over at Comox. Arrival at Comox was at 10:00 hours Pacific Daylight Time. As the pilot was aware of poor weather conditions at Port Hardy, he rechecked the weather and delayed his departure for forty five minutes.

At 10:45 hours the aircraft departed Comox for Port Hardy with a possible stop at Alert Bay. There was one pilot and eight passengers aboard. At 10:52 hours the pilot contacted the Campbell River F.S.S., and requested the latest weather at Port Hardy. A special weather observation taken at 1715Z was passed to the pilot, weather conditions were, indefinite ceiling 200 obscured, one half mile visibility in fog, temperature 13°C, dewpoint 12°C, winds 020 degrees at 3. Altimeter 30.08 in Hg., clouds 9/10 fog, 3/10 stratus, balloon visible to 400 feet. A pilot in the vicinity of Port Hardy reported the clouds to be based at 6 to 800 feet with tops at 1800 feet. The pilot acknowledged the Campbell River transmission.

Flight 850 departed Comox in good VFR weather conditions but approximately 30 minutes later encountered fog conditions. At this point the passengers expected the pilot to turn back, instead he continued. The denseness of the fog increased, and as reported by the passengers, the wing tips could not be seen. Witnesses on the surface reported hearing the aircraft fly overhead but were unable to see the aircraft because of dense fog. These same witnesses also reported hearing the sound of the aircraft crashing a few seconds later. The aircraft struck a 5000 feet mountain at the 1200 foot level. The intense fire which broke out at impact consumed most of the wreckage.

The aircraft, a Britten Norman (BN 2A-26) had a total airframe time of 4650 hours and was considered to be in a serviceable condition prior to the crash. The all up weight and the centre of gravity was within the prescribed limits.

The pilot was 53 years old and held a valid commercial licence. He had a total of 3000 hours of which at least 100 hours were on type. His last proficiency check was carried out 50 weeks earlier on 1st September 1978.

He did not have an instrument rating nor did he require one providing that the flight was conducted during day VFR conditions. Night VFR flights require a class II rating. The Company was licensed to operate this service under VFR conditions.

1. Collision with trees and ground.

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ICAO FACTORS

64A04 Pilot - Continued VFR flight into adverse weather conditions.

64A66 Pilot - Spatial disorientation (vertigo).

82AC Weather - Fog.

83AI Terrain Conditions - High obstructions.

SAFETY PROPOSAL

None included.

20/3/80
ASI-02