

Brief of Accident

Adopted 10/29/2013

ERA12LA290 File No. 31739	04/19/2012	GM	Aircraft Reg No. N48DL	Time (Local): 12:08 CDT
Make/Model: Cessna / 421C	Engine Make/Model: Continental / GTSIO-520-L	Aircraft Damage: Substantial	Number of Engines: 2	Operating Certificate(s): None
				Type of Flight Operation: Personal
Reg. Flight Conducted Under: Part 91: General Aviation				
Last Depart. Point: Slidell, LA	Destination: Sarasota, FL	Airport Proximity: Off Airport/Airstrip	Condition of Light: Day	Weather Info Src: Weather Observation Facility
			Basic Weather: Visual Conditions	Lowest Ceiling: None
			Visibility: 10.00 SM	Wind Dir/Speed: Light and Variable
			Temperature (°C): 12	Precip/Obscuration: No Obscuration; No Precipitation
Pilot-in-Command	Age: 65		Flight Time (Hours)	
Certificate(s)/Rating(s)	Private; Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land		Total All Aircraft: 2350	
Instrument Ratings	Airplane		Last 90 Days: Unk/Nr	
			Total Make/Model: Unk/Nr	
			Total Instrument Time: UnK/Nr	

*** Note: NTSB investigators may not have traveled in support of this investigation and used data provided by various sources to prepare this aircraft accident report. ***

According to a statement provided by the Jacksonville Center air traffic control (ATC) facility, the pilot contacted ATC while at flight level 270. About 25 minutes later, the airplane began to deviate from the ATC-assigned altitude and route. The controller's attempts to contact the pilot were unsuccessful. The North American Aerospace Defense Command launched military fighter aircraft to intercept the airplane. The military pilots reported that the airplane was circling in a left turn at a high altitude and low airspeed and that its windows were partially frosted over. They also reported that the pilot was slumped over in the cockpit and not moving. They fired flares, and the pilot continued to be unresponsive. The airplane circled for about 3 hours before it descended into the Gulf of Mexico and sank. The pilot and airplane were not recovered. Review of the pilot's Federal Aviation Administration medical records did not reveal any recent medical conditions that would have deemed him unfit to fly.

Updated at Oct 29 2013 1:50PM

Brief of Accident (Continued)

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OCCURRENCES

Enroute-cruise - Unknown or undetermined

Uncontrolled descent - Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

FINDINGS

Personnel issues-Physical-Impairment/incapacitation-(general)-Pilot - C

Findings Legend: (C) = Cause, (F) = Factor

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

Pilot incapacitation, which resulted in the pilot's inability to maintain airplane control and the airplane's subsequent ocean impact.