



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

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<b>Location:</b>	KALTAG, AK	<b>Accident Number:</b>	ANC90FA161
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	09/03/1990, 1520 AKD	<b>Registration:</b>	N59783
<b>Aircraft:</b>	PIPER PA-31-325	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	3 Fatal, 6 Serious, 1 Minor

**Flight Conducted Under:** Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter - Scheduled

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## Analysis

THE PILOT REPORTED THAT THE #2 ENGINE BEGAN TO LOSE POWER AS HE WAS FLYING UNDER A LOW OVERCAST & ABOUT 500 FT ABOVE A RIVER. SUBSEQUENTLY, THE AIRPLANE DESCENDED & THE FUSELAGE & LEFT PROPELLER CONTACTED THE WATER. WITH THESE PROBLEMS & DECREASING VISIBILITY AHEAD, THE PILOT ELECTED TO MAKE A 180 DEGREE TURN. HE SAID THAT ABOUT MIDWAY THROUGH THE TURN, THE #2 ENGINE LOST ALL POWER. THE AIRPLANE THEN CRASHED INTO TREES & WAS DESTROYED BY A POST-IMPACT FIRE. NO REASON WAS FOUND FOR EITHER ENGINE TO LOSE POWER BEFORE WATER OR TREE CONTACT.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: FAILURE OF THE PILOT TO MAINTAIN ADEQUATE ALTITUDE AFTER BECOMING DISTRACTED WITH AN ENGINE PROBLEM. FACTORS RELATED TO THE ACCIDENT WERE: LOSS OF POWER IN THE #2 ENGINE FOR AN UNKNOWN REASON AND THE LOW OVERCAST CONDITION.

## Findings

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Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER

Phase of Operation: CRUISE

Findings

1. 1 ENGINE
2. (F) REASON FOR OCCURRENCE UNDETERMINED

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Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: OTHER

Findings

3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - LOW CEILING
4. TERRAIN CONDITION - WATER
5. (C) ALTITUDE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
6. (C) DIVERTED ATTENTION - PILOT IN COMMAND

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Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT

Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING - TURN TO REVERSE DIRECTION

Findings

7. OBJECT - TREE(S)

## Factual Information

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Airline Transport; Flight Instructor; Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	34, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Unknown
<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>	Airplane Multi-engine; Airplane Single-engine; Instrument Airplane	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 1 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	07/31/1990
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>		<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	8150 hours (Total, all aircraft), 500 hours (Total, this make and model), 6943 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 300 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 100 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	PIPER	<b>Registration:</b>	N59783
<b>Model/Series:</b>	PA-31-325 PA-31-325	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	No
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>		<b>Serial Number:</b>	31-7612024
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Retractable - Tricycle	<b>Seats:</b>	8
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	Unknown	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	6500 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	0 Hours	<b>Engines:</b>	2 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>		<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	LYCOMING
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	TIO-540-F2BD
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	CHRISTOPHER A. STEPOVICH	<b>Rated Power:</b>	325 hp
<b>Operator:</b>	FRONTIER FLYING SERVICE	<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	Commuter Air Carrier (135)
<b>Operator Does Business As:</b>		<b>Operator Designator Code:</b>	FFSA

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Unknown	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	, 0 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	0000	Direction from Accident Site:	0°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown / 0 ft agl	Visibility	2 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 700 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots / 7 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	220°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	7°C / -18°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	NULATO, AK (NUL)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	KALTAG, AK (KAL)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1510 ADT	Type of Airspace:	

## Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	3 Fatal, 5 Serious, 1 Minor	Aircraft Fire:	On-Ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 Fatal, 6 Serious, 1 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	

## Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	ROY C DAW	Report Date:	07/10/1992
Additional Participating Persons:	HUGH MCLAUGHLIN; FARIBANKS, AK CHARLES R ADAMS, JR.; 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> .		

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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](#).