



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	Anthony, New Mexico	<b>Accident Number:</b>	CEN11TA064
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	November 10, 2010, 11:00 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N44956
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Partenavia P.68	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<b>Defining Event:</b>	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)	<b>Injuries:</b>	3 Minor
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Public aircraft		

## Analysis

While performing a low-level law enforcement patrol flight, the pilot crossed a ridge and observed a parked vehicle. To investigate further, he lowered the flaps and descended to approximately 200 feet, into a canyon. The pilot made a second pass over the vehicle and initiated a right turn, during which the airplane encountered a tailwind that resulted in a rapid loss of airspeed and a descent. The pilot leveled the airplane and increased the power; however, the airplane was too slow and low to turn out of the canyon. As a result, the airplane stalled and impacted terrain. The pilot stated there were no preflight mechanical malfunctions or anomalies with the airplane

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's decision to conduct a low-level flight in mountainous terrain in an area where downdrafts were prevalent, resulting in the inadvertent loss of control and the collision with the terrain.

## Findings

<b>Personnel issues</b>	Incorrect action performance - Pilot
<b>Environmental issues</b>	Downdraft - Effect on operation
<b>Environmental issues</b>	Mountainous/hilly terrain - Awareness of condition

## Factual Information

On November 10, 2010, approximately 1200 mountain standard time, a Partenavia P.68, N44956, registered to and operated by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Austin, Texas, was destroyed when it encountered a downdraft and impacted terrain near Anthony, New Mexico. Visual meteorological conditions (VMC) prevailed at the time of the accident. The pilot and two passengers on board the airplane sustained minor injuries. The public use flight originated at El Paso (ELP), Texas, at 1015 and was destined to return to ELP.

According to the pilot's accident report, he crossed the southern ridge of the Anthony Gap and observed a parked vehicle. To investigate further, the pilot lowered the flaps and descended to approximately 200 feet. There was a ridge approximately the same elevation as the flight path. On the other side of the mountain, winds were from the south approximately 10 to 15 knots. The pilot made a second pass over the vehicle at 200 feet and initiated a right turn. At that same moment, he encountered a tailwind that resulted in a rapid loss of airspeed and the airplane descended. The pilot leveled his wings and increased power. The airplane was too slow and low to turn out of the canyon. The pilot tried to cross over a saddle ridge but was too low. The left main gear struck the ridge and was torn off. The pilot rolled the wings to match the terrain but the nose dropped. The airplane buffeted and the stall warning sounded. The airplane struck the terrain and slid to a stop. The pilot said the unanticipated downdraft could not have been foreseen.

## History of Flight

Maneuvering	Loss of control in flight
Uncontrolled descent	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT) (Defining event)

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Commercial; Flight instructor; Military	<b>Age:</b>	43, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	Helicopter	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane; Helicopter	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	Airplane single-engine; Helicopter; Instrument airplane; Instrument helicopter	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 2 Without waivers/limitations	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	April 12, 2010
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	Yes	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	May 26, 2010
<b>Flight Time:</b>	4562 hours (Total, all aircraft), 106 hours (Total, this make and model), 2767 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 136 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 52 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 5 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Partenavia	<b>Registration:</b>	N44956
<b>Model/Series:</b>	P.68	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	No
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	318-13/OB
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Tricycle	<b>Seats:</b>	5
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	November 4, 2010 Annual	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	4321 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	6 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	2 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	7065 Hrs as of last inspection	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Lycoming
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed, not activated	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	IO-360-A1B6
<b>Registered Owner:</b>		<b>Rated Power:</b>	200 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>		<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	ELP, 3958 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	16 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	10:51 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	140°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:		Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	6 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	180°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.04 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	14° C / -11° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	El Paso, TX (ELP )	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	El Paso, TX (ELP )	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	Class G

## Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	2 Minor	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	32.00111, -106.507225

## Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Scott, Arnold
Additional Participating Persons:	Richard S Cramer; FAA Flight Standards District Office; Albuquerque, NM
Original Publish Date:	May 16, 2011
Note:	
Investigation Docket:	<a href="https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=77772">https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=77772</a>

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