

**Brief of Accident**

**Adopted 01/17/2012**

ANC10FA064  
File No. 29334                      07/23/2010                      Ketchikan, AK                      Aircraft Reg No. N9290Z                      Time (Local): 07:27 ADT

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Make/Model: Dehavilland / BEAVER DHC-2 MK.1  
Engine Make/Model: P&w / R-985 SERIES  
Aircraft Damage: Substantial  
Number of Engines: 1  
Operating Certificate(s): Commuter Air Carrier; On-demand Air Taxi  
Name of Carrier: Pacific Airways, Inc.  
Type of Flight Operation: Non-scheduled; Domestic; Cargo  
Reg. Flight Conducted Under: Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter

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	Fatal	Serious	Minor/None
Crew	1	0	0
Pass	0	0	0

Last Depart. Point: Thorne Bay, AK  
Destination: Same as Accident/Incident Location  
Airport Proximity: Off Airport/Airstrip

Condition of Light: Day  
Weather Info Src: Weather Observation Facility  
Basic Weather: Instrument Conditions  
Lowest Ceiling: 1300 Ft. AGL, Broken  
Visibility: 2.00 SM  
Wind Dir/Speed: 140 / 017 Kts  
Temperature (°C): 12  
Precip/Obscuration: Light - Rain; Mist

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Pilot-in-Command                      Age: 38

Flight Time (Hours)

Certificate(s)/Rating(s)  
Commercial; Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land; Single-engine Sea

Total All Aircraft: 5300  
Last 90 Days: 97  
Total Make/Model: 4500  
Total Instrument Time: 45

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Instrument Ratings  
Airplane

\*\*\* Note: NTSB investigators either traveled in support of this investigation or conducted a significant amount of investigative work without any travel, and used data obtained from various sources to prepare this aircraft accident report. \*\*\*

The pilot had been advised by the Federal Aviation Administration flight service station (FSS) specialist to remain clear of the destination airport until the specialist could issue a special visual flight rules clearance. Instrument meteorological conditions prevailed at the airport, with a strong southeasterly wind. About 8 minutes after initial contact, the FSS specialist attempted to contact the pilot to issue the clearance but received no response. A witness about 0.5 mile southeast of the accident site said he saw the accident airplane flying very low over the treetops. He said the weather conditions consisted of low clouds, rain, and gusty southeasterly wind estimated at 30 to 40 knots. He said that, as the airplane passed overhead, it turned sharply to the left. As he watched the airplane, the wings rocked violently from side to side, and the nose pitched up and down. As the airplane passed low over hilly, tree-covered terrain, it rolled to the right, the right wing struck a large tree and separated, and the airplane descended behind a stand of trees. Pilots flying in the accident area reported strong wind with significant downdrafts and turbulence. A postaccident examination of the airplane did not disclose any preimpact mechanical malfunctions. Given the lack of mechanical deficiencies and the reports of turbulence and downdrafts, as well as the witness' account of the airplane's physical movements, it is likely that the pilot encountered significant terrain-induced turbulence and downdrafts while flying at low altitude. The area surrounding the accident site and portions of the pilot's earlier flight path were bordered by large areas of open and protected water, several of which were suitable for landing the float-equipped airplane.

Brief of Accident (Continued)

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Updated at Jan 17 2012 11:41AM

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OCCURRENCES

Maneuvering-low-alt flying - Turbulence encounter  
Maneuvering-low-alt flying - Loss of control in flight  
Uncontrolled descent - Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

FINDINGS

Environmental issues-Conditions/weather/phenomena-Wind-Gusts-Contributed to outcome  
Aircraft-Aircraft oper/perf/capability-Performance/control parameters-Lateral/bank control-Not attained/maintained  
Personnel issues-Task performance-Use of equip/info-Aircraft control-Pilot - C  
Personnel issues-Action/decision-Info processing/decision-Decision making/judgment-Pilot - C

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

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The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:  
The pilot's decision to continue the flight toward his destination in significant turbulence and downdrafts, and his subsequent failure to maintain control of the airplane while flying low over rising terrain.