



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	KEY WEST, FL	Accident Number:	MIA85LA082
Date & Time:	01/17/1985, 0205 EST	Registration:	N70CZ
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-31-350	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation -		

Analysis

THE ACFT CRASHED INTO THE OCEAN SHORTLY AFTER TAKEOFF ON AN UNAUTHORIZED FLT. THE PLT WAS A STUDENT PLT WHO WORKED AS A REFUELER OF ACFT. THE STUDENT PLT TOOK THE UNATTENDED PARKED ACFT WITHOUT PERMISSION AND WENT FOR A SOLO FLT AT SOMETIME AROUND 0200 HRS. THE FLT ENDED ALMOST AS SOON AS IT BEGAN AS THE ACFT CRASHED INTO THE OCEAN 300 YARDS OFFSHORE FROM KEY WEST, FL. THE ACFT SANK IN 10 FT OF WATER.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT

Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings

1. (F) LIGHT CONDITION - DARK NIGHT
2. (C) FLIGHT CONTROLS - IMPROPER USE OF - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) VISUAL/AURAL PERCEPTION - PILOT IN COMMAND
4. (C) PROCEDURES/DIRECTIVES - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND
5. (C) OVERCONFIDENCE IN PERSONAL ABILITY - PILOT IN COMMAND
6. (C) JUDGMENT - POOR - PILOT IN COMMAND
7. (C) ALTITUDE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
8. (C) EMOTIONAL REACTION - PILOT IN COMMAND
9. (C) PROPER CLIMB RATE - NOT ATTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
10. (C) LACK OF TOTAL EXPERIENCE IN TYPE OPERATION - PILOT IN COMMAND
11. (C) CLEARANCE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
12. (C) SPATIAL DISORIENTATION - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Student	Age:	25, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	None	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	None None	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:			

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N70CZ
Model/Series:	PA-31-350 PA-31-350	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	31-7952169
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	8
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	11/05/1984, 100 Hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	7000 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	6 Hours	Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	5256 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, activated, aided in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	TIO-540
Registered Owner:	SOUTHERN EXPRESS AIRWAYS	Rated Power:	310 hp
Operator:	SOUTHERN EXPRESS AIRWAYS	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	Commuter Air Carrier (135)

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Night/Dark
Observation Facility, Elevation:	EYW, 4 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	1 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	0200 EST	Direction from Accident Site:	180°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 0 ft agl	Visibility	10 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None / 0 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	14 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	170°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	22° C / 15° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	KEY WEST, FL (EYW)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	0000	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

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

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	RONALD W BIRD	Report Date:	
Additional Participating Persons:			
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 pubinquiry@ntsb.gov , or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/ .		

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), established in 1967, is an independent federal agency mandated by Congress through the Independent Safety Board Act of 1974 to investigate transportation accidents, determine the probable causes of the accidents, issue safety recommendations, study transportation safety issues, and evaluate the safety effectiveness of government agencies involved in transportation. The NTSB makes public its actions and decisions through accident reports, safety studies, special investigation reports, safety recommendations, and statistical reviews.

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](#).