



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

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<b>Location:</b>	MILES CITY, MT	<b>Accident Number:</b>	DEN84FA121
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	03/31/1984, 0203 MST	<b>Registration:</b>	N743W
<b>Aircraft:</b>	AERO COMMANDER 500-B	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Serious
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter - Non-scheduled		

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## Analysis

THE PLT SAID THAT WHEN HE CALLED ON THE RADIO PRIOR TO THE APPROACH FOR AN ALTIMETER SETTING THE REPLY WAS '30.11 OR 30.12, SOMETHING LIKE THAT.' THE ACFT ALTIMETER WAS FOUND AFTER THE ACCIDENT SET AT 30.22 INCHES OF MERCURY. THE VISIBILITY WAS DESCRIBED AS 1 AND 1/2 MILES IN SNOW SHOWERS. HE CONTINUED THE APPROACH 'BECAUSE MINIMUMS ARE ONE MILE.' HE DESCENDED OUTBOUND TO 4500 FT. MINIMUM PROCEDURE TURN ALT IS 4700 FT MSL. THE PLT THEN DESCENDED TO 3700 FT MSL AS HE APPROACHED THE VOR. POWER WAS REDUCED TO 17-18 INCHES OF MANIFOLD PRESSURE AND AIRSPEED REDUCED TO 120 KTS. AS THE VOR WAS CROSSED HE GLANCED AT THE ALTIMETER AND 'THE HANDS WERE IN THE TWO O'CLOCK POSITION.' LANDING GEAR WAS EXTENDED AND APPROACH FLAPS SET. THE PLT SAID ALL SEEMED NORMAL. HE LOOKED OUT THE WINDOW AND SAW 'WISPY CLOUDS GOING BY RAPIDLY. THEN THERE WERE THE SOUNDS OF IMPACT.' THE NEXT THING REMEMBERED WAS THE SOUND OF DRIPPING GASOLINE. THE PLT SAID HE CRAWLED OUT OF THE COCKPIT WINDOW AND WANDERED 'FOR A COUPLE HOURS TRYING TO CHASE DOWN THE SEARCH LIGHTS.'

## Probable Cause and Findings

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

## Findings

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Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: APPROACH - FAF/OUTER MARKER TO THRESHOLD (IFR)

### Findings

1. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - MOUNTAINOUS/HILLY
2. (C) ALTIMETER SETTING - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - LOW CEILING
4. (C) IFR PROCEDURE - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND
5. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - OBSCURATION
6. (C) PROPER ALTITUDE - BELOW - PILOT IN COMMAND
7. (F) LIGHT CONDITION - DARK NIGHT
8. (C) MINIMUM DESCENT ALTITUDE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

## Factual Information

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	34, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	Helicopter	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	Seatbelt
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	Airplane Single-engine; Helicopter; Instrument Airplane	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 1 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	06/07/1983
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>		
<b>Flight Time:</b>	2750 hours (Total, all aircraft), 394 hours (Total, this make and model), 2131 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 199 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 66 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 6 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	AERO COMMANDER	<b>Registration:</b>	N743W
<b>Model/Series:</b>	500-B 500-B	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	No
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	500B117389
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Retractable - Tricycle	<b>Seats:</b>	2
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	03/23/1984, AAIP	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	6750 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	12 Hours	<b>Engines:</b>	2 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	13453 Hours	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	LYCOMING
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	IO-540-B1A5
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	COMBS AIRWAYS, INC.	<b>Rated Power:</b>	290 hp
<b>Operator:</b>	COMBS AIRWAYS, INC.	<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	Air Cargo
<b>Operator Does Business As:</b>		<b>Operator Designator Code:</b>	CMBA

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument Conditions	Condition of Light:	Night/Dark
Observation Facility, Elevation:	MLS, 2628 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	2 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	0209 MST	Direction from Accident Site:	360°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown / 0 ft agl	Visibility	0 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Obscured / 1500 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	12 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	100°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	0°C / -3°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	BILLINGS, MT (BIL)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	IFR
Departure Time:	0107 MST	Type of Airspace:	Airport Advisory Area; Class E

## Airport Information

Airport:	FRANK WILEY (MLS)	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	2628 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Snow--wet
Runway Used:	12	IFR Approach:	VOR
Runway Length/Width:	5602 ft / 100 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

## Wreckage and Impact Information

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

## Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	ARNOLD W SCOTT	Report Date:	
Additional Participating Persons:	LEE ASKELSON /NM-FSDO-63; BILLINGS, MT		
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:pubinquiry@ntsb.gov">pubinquiry@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](#).