



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	HUFFMAN, TX	Accident Number:	FTW86FA107
Date & Time:	06/13/1986, 1303 CDT	Registration:	N3539K
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-31-350	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	2 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Business		

Analysis

THE PILOT WAS BEING VECTORED AROUND THUNDERSTORMS IN THE AREA JUST PRIOR TO THE ACCIDENT. DURING THE LAST RADIO CONTACT THE PILOT WAS ISSUED A VECTOR TO THE DESTINATION AIRPORT. DURING THIS TURN, FOR UNKNOWN REASONS, THE PILOT LOST CONTROL OF THE AIRCRAFT AND DESCENDED FROM THE ASSIGNED ALTITUDE OF 6,000 FT MSL TO THE GROUND IN APPROXIMATELY 40 SECONDS. THE AIRCRAFT REPORTEDLY WAS IN CLEAR WEATHER CONDITIONS AT THIS TIME AND HAD NOT ENCOUNTERED ADVERSE WEATHER DURING THE ENTIRE FLIGHT. THE PILOT DID NOT MENTION ANY PROBLEMS DURING THE RADIO TRANSMISSION WITH ATC. IMPACT IN A SHALLOW LAKE OCCURRED WHILE IN A NEAR VERTICAL NOSE DOWN ATTITUDE AT A HIGH RATE OF SPEED. THE RIGHT PROPELLER WAS FOUND TO HAVE BEEN FEATHERED AT THE TIME OF IMPACT WHILE THE LEFT PROPELLER WAS SET IN THE CRUISE RANGE. NO EVIDENCE OF ANY PREIMPACT FAILURE OR MALFUNCTION OF THE RIGHT ENGINE OR PROPELLER WAS DISCOVERED DURING POST ACCIDENT TESTS. PATH AND TOXI EXAMS REVEALED NO PHYSIOLOGICAL FACTORS. PLTS FLT TIME RECORDS NOT AVAILABLE AT TIME OF INVESTIGATION.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

Findings

Occurrence #1: UNDETERMINED

Phase of Operation: CRUISE - NORMAL

Findings

1. (C) REASON FOR OCCURRENCE UNDETERMINED
2. PROPELLER FEATHERING - PERFORMED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT

Phase of Operation: CRUISE - NORMAL

Findings

3. (C) AIRSPEED - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #3: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	64, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	09/25/1985
Occupational Pilot:	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:		
Flight Time:	10000 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	PIPER	Registration:	N3539K
Model/Series:	PA-31-350 PA-31-350	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	31-7912116
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	6500 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed	Engine Model/Series:	TIO-540-J2BD
Registered Owner:	SOUTHERN ENTERPRISES, INC.	Rated Power:	350 hp
Operator:	SOUTHERN ENTERPRISES, INC.	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	IAH, 98 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	14 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	1252 CDT	Direction from Accident Site:	260°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown / 2500 ft agl	Visibility	15 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 2500 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	20 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	200°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	27° C / 21° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	LAKE CHARLES, LA (LCH)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Destination:	HOUSTON, TX (HOU)	Type of Clearance:	IFR
Departure Time:	1223 CDT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	J O JOHNSON	Report Date:	
Additional Participating Persons:	JAMES MEYERS; HOUSTON, TX		
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 pubinq@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](#).