



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

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<b>Location:</b>	WILLOW, AK	<b>Accident Number:</b>	ANC97LA090
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	06/25/1997, 1130 AKD	<b>Registration:</b>	N765D
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Beech D18S	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	1 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Business		

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## Analysis

The pilot took off from a 4400-foot-long gravel airstrip with a near gross weight load of cargo. He said that shortly after lift-off the airplane felt 'sluggish', and he believes the left engine began to lose power. He said the airplane would not climb, and he elected to bring both engines to idle and land on the remaining runway. The airplane touched down a short distance from the end of the runway, and continued off the end and into the woods. A fire erupted, and the airplane was destroyed by fire. The pilot is unsure if the fire occurred in the air, or shortly after the airplane went off the end of the runway. The engines were extensively damaged by fire, and were not examined. FAA inspectors on scene said there was no obvious signs of catastrophic engine failure.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The loss of engine power for an undetermined reason.

## Findings

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Occurrence #1: LOSS OF ENGINE POWER  
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

### Findings

1. (C) REASON FOR OCCURRENCE UNDETERMINED  
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Occurrence #2: FORCED LANDING  
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING AFTER TAKEOFF  
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Occurrence #3: ON GROUND/WATER COLLISION WITH OBJECT  
Phase of Operation: EMERGENCY LANDING AFTER TAKEOFF

### Findings

2. OBJECT - TREE(S)  
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Occurrence #4: FIRE  
Phase of Operation: LANDING - ROLL

## Factual Information

On June 25, 1997, about 1130 Alaska daylight time, a wheel equipped Beech D18S airplane, N765D, was destroyed during takeoff from the Willow Airport, Willow, Alaska. The solo airline transport certificated pilot was not injured. The business flight operated under 14 CFR Part 91 in visual meteorological conditions, and a company flight plan was in effect. The intended destination was Sleetmute, Alaska, which was the first leg of a flight with stops at Sleetmute and Stony River, Alaska, and eventual return to Willow.

During a telephone interview with the NTSB investigator-in-charge on June 27, the pilot related he has a retail business that supplies groceries and other items to remote villages. He said he uses airplanes to transport those goods to his customers. On the accident flight, he said he loaded the airplane with a combination of groceries, three 55-gallon drums of gasoline, a propane tank, and other assorted items. He said he believed the gross weight of the airplane was about 100 to 200 pounds under its allowable gross weight of 10,100 pounds.

Shortly after liftoff from runway 31 (gravel, 4,400 feet), he said the airplane "felt a little weak" in the climb. About 100 feet above the ground, he said the left wing dropped slightly, and the right wing rose, causing him to believe the left engine was not developing full power. He said the airplane would not climb, and he elected to bring both engines to idle and land. The airplane touched down a short distance prior to the end of the runway, and then went into and beyond the overrun area, colliding with small trees and brush. The pilot said he is not sure if the left engine was on fire prior to impact, but a significant fire was visible on the left wing as he went off the end of the runway.

The pilot was able to exit the airplane unaided.

A pilot who was flying overhead the Willow Airport at 5,500 feet msl, said he saw the accident airplane lined up at the very end of runway 31. He said he saw the dust cloud as the airplane began its takeoff run, and was concerned the airplane would not liftoff prior to the end of the runway. He also said the airplane swerved to the left a couple of times during the takeoff roll. He said he was relieved when he saw the airplane liftoff about 500 feet from the end of the runway, and he momentarily looked away. When he looked back, he saw another cloud of dust, and the airplane on the ground and in the trees off the end of runway 31. He saw fire, and someone running away from the airplane.

The majority of the airplane was destroyed by fire. The engines were recovered from the wreckage, but were extensively damaged by fire, and were not examined by the NTSB.

FAA inspectors who went to the accident site reported the engines displayed no obvious signs of catastrophic failure.

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Airline Transport	<b>Age:</b>	42, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land; Single-engine Sea	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	Airplane Single-engine; Instrument Airplane	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 2 Valid Medical--no waivers/lim.	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	07/15/1996
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>		<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	8000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 35 hours (Total, this make and model), 7900 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 100 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 45 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Beech	<b>Registration:</b>	N765D
<b>Model/Series:</b>	D18S D18S	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	No
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	A-818
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Retractable - Tailwheel	<b>Seats:</b>	2
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	11/15/1996, Annual	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	10100 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	10 Hours	<b>Engines:</b>	2 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	8600 Hours	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	P&W
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed, not activated	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	R-985
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	WALTER WARNER	<b>Rated Power:</b>	450 hp
<b>Operator:</b>	WALTER WARNER	<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	, 0 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	0000	Direction from Accident Site:	0°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear / 0 ft agl	Visibility	100 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None / 0 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	Calm /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	21 °C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	(UUO)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	Company VFR
Destination:	SLEETMUTE, AK (SLQ)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1130 ADT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

## Airport Information

Airport:	WILLOW (UUO)	Runway Surface Type:	Gravel
Airport Elevation:	220 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	31	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	4400 ft / 75 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

## Wreckage and Impact Information

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

## Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	JAMES D LABELLE	Report Date:	11/10/1998
Additional Participating Persons:	VERENE MILLER (FAA); ANCHORAGE, AK		
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:pubinq@ntsb.gov">pubinq@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> .		

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](#).