



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	Gulf of Mexico,	Accident Number:	CEN19TA321
Date & Time:	September 15, 2019, 11:46 Local	Registration:	N218MW
Aircraft:	Piper PA46	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:	Loss of engine power (total)	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot reported that, during a cross-country flight, he descended the airplane from 10,500 ft to 1,500 ft, then configured the airplane for a climb; however, the engine did not respond to the application of power and the airplane began losing altitude. After performing the emergency checklist, the pilot was not able to restore power to the engine. The pilot declared an emergency, activated the emergency locator transmitter, and ditched the airplane in the water. The airplane sank and was not recovered, thus the reason for the loss of engine power could not be determined.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

A loss of engine power for undetermined reasons.

Findings

Not determined	(general) - Unknown/Not determined
----------------	------------------------------------

Factual Information

On September 15, 2019, at 1146 central daylight time, a Piper PA-46-350P, N218MW, lost engine power while maneuvering over the Gulf of Mexico, and the pilot was forced to ditch. The private pilot was not injured. The airplane was registered to and operated by Mailworks, Inc., Spring Valley, California, under Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 as a personal flight. Visual meteorological conditions existed near the accident site at the time of the accident, and the flight was operated on a visual flight rules flight plan. The flight originated at 0830 eastern daylight time from Space Coast Regional Airport (TIX), Titusville, Florida, and was en route to Ozona Municipal Airport (OZA), Ozona, Texas. His final destination was Gillespie Field Airport (SEE), El Cajon, California.

According to the pilot's accident report, he departed TIX with 140 gallons of fuel. After crossing Gulfport (GPT), Mississippi's Terminal Radar Service Area (TRSA) at 10,500 ft, he initiated a slow descent over Boothville, Louisiana, and proceeded southbound towards the mouth of the Mississippi River, descending to 1,500 ft. He then configured the airplane for climb. The engine did not respond to the application of power and the airplane began losing altitude. After going through the emergency checklist, he was unable to restore engine power, and declared an emergency to Houston air route traffic control center (ARTCC) and on frequency 121.5 MHz. He also activated the emergency locator transmitter (ELT) prior to ditching.

After ditching, the pilot put on his life jacket, exited the airplane, and remained on its wing until it sank. About an hour later, a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter rescued the pilot and transported him to a hospital in New Orleans, Louisiana. He was discharged a few hours later. The airplane has not been recovered.

History of Flight

Maneuvering	Loss of engine power (total) (Defining event)
Emergency descent	Ditching

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	63, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	3-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	December 13, 2017
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	May 4, 2019
Flight Time:	(Estimated) 3500 hours (Total, all aircraft), 2000 hours (Total, this make and model), 3400 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 14 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 14 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 3 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N218MW
Model/Series:	PA46 350P	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	2010	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	4636470
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	April 26, 2019 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	4340 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	30 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	1116 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	TIO-540-AE2A
Registered Owner:		Rated Power:	350 Horsepower
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:		Distance from Accident Site:	
Observation Time:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few	Visibility	20 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	16 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	30°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Titusville, FL (TIX)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	
Destination:	Ozona, TX (OZA)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	08:30 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	28.866945, -89.302223

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Scott, Arnold		
Additional Participating Persons:	Paul Marz; FAA Flight Standards District Office; Baton Rouge, LA		
Original Publish Date:	January 28, 2021	Investigation Class:	3
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.		
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=100264		

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](#).