

# National Transportation Safety Board

Office of Aviation Safety

Washington, DC 20594



ANC23FA001

## **WRECKAGE EXAMINATION SUMMARY**

October 6, 2022

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                                                      |    |
|------------------------------------------------------|----|
| A. ACCIDENT.....                                     | 3  |
| B. SUMMARY .....                                     | 3  |
| C. DETAILS OF THE EXAMINATION.....                   | 3  |
| 1.0 ACCIDENT SITE .....                              | 3  |
| 2.0 AIRFRAME EXAMINATION.....                        | 5  |
| 2.1 Fuselage.....                                    | 5  |
| 2.2 Empennage .....                                  | 5  |
| 2.3 Wings 5                                          |    |
| 2.4 Landing Gear.....                                | 6  |
| 2.5 Cockpit.....                                     | 8  |
| 2.6 Survivability.....                               | 8  |
| 2.7 Fuel/Fuel System.....                            | 9  |
| 2.8 Cargo 9                                          |    |
| 3.0 ENGINE EXAMINATION .....                         | 10 |
| 4.0 PROPELLER EXAMINATION .....                      | 11 |
| 5.0 WITNESS SUMMARY .....                            | 11 |
| 6.0 AIRCRAFT INFORMATION – MAINTENANCE RECORDS ..... | 11 |
| 7.0 METEOROLOGICAL INFORMATION .....                 | 11 |

## **A. ACCIDENT**

Location: Fairbanks Alaska  
Date: October 5, 2022  
Time: 1758 AKDT  
October 6, 2022, 0158 Z  
Airplane: Cessna 185F, N217C

## **B. SUMMARY**

On October 05, 2022, about 1758 Alaska daylight time, a Cessna 185F airplane, N217C was involved in an accident at the Chena Marina Airport (AK28), Fairbanks, Alaska. The private pilot was fatally injured. The airplane was operated by the pilot as a Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91 personal flight.

The pilot aborted the initial takeoff attempt from the water at AK28 and was water taxiing back to attempt another takeoff. A witness located next to the water way observed the airplane's attempted takeoff and watched the airplane back taxi for another attempt. The witness reported that the airplane's engine appeared to be operating at full power during the attempted takeoff. He noted that during the water taxi, the airplane's attitude was nose low with the floats almost completely submerged underwater. Another witness on the other side of the water way noted the floats looked almost fully submerged under water as the airplane back taxied. The witness said the airplane was using more than normal power to taxi in the water with the elevators pulled full back. He heard the engine power decrease and saw the airplane nose over. He then heard the engine power increase, but the pilot was unable to correct the rolling motion and the airplane nosed over into the water.

## **C. DETAILS OF THE EXAMINATION**

### **1.0 Accident Site**

The airplane had attempted to depart to the north from Chena Marina. The pilot aborted the takeoff and was taxiing back to attempt another takeoff. Witnesses described the airplane in a lower than normal nose down position, and floats nearly submerged. One witness said the pilot reduced power, the airplane pitched down and began to nose over. The pilot attempted to add power to recover but was unsuccessful and the airplane nosed over in the water and began to sink in a nose down position. Video surveillance confirmed witness statement. Airplane was pulled to shore in attempt to rescue the pilot.



**Figure 1 Accident location.**



**Figure 2 Left side of accident airplane.**

## **2.0 Airframe Examination**

No damage to airplane. Only damage to airframe was from recovery. The airplane nosed over slowly into the water and had no damage.

### **2.1 Fuselage**

No Damage

### **2.2 Empennage**

No Damage

### **2.3 Wings**

No Damage

## 2.4 Landing Gear

EDO 3430. Both floats had 2 unplugged holes just under the bow bumper. Both floats had patches in poor condition along the keel. The left float had unserviceable wear along the keel.



**Figure 3 Right front under side of float**



**Figure 4 Left under side of float. Showing wear on the keel.**



**Figure 5 Left front under side of float**

## **2.5 Cockpit**

Flight control continuity was established in all flight controls.

## **2.6 Survivability**

The airplane had three-point seat belts. Both shoulder belts were found tucked into a holder above the door. Cargo was not secured and caused difficulty and delay

in attempted rescue of the pilot. When the airplane nosed over, the unsecured cargo pinned the pilot to the dash. Below is a picture of the gear they had to remove before they could free the pilot. This is not all the cargo that was in the airplane. Approximately 694.5 pounds of cargo moved forward and trapped the pilot.

## **2.7 Fuel/Fuel System**

Plane was leaking fuel at site out of all four fuel tanks. It is likely that the airplane was full of fuel.

## **2.8 Cargo**

Note: the gear was placed in a building, on top of a floor drain overnight but items were still wet when weighing them

Items that were removed during rescue attempt of pilot.

|                                      |           |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| 9 gas cans -                         | 290 lbs.  |
| Backpack -                           | 46 lbs.   |
| Generator -                          | 53 lbs.   |
| Green Duffle -                       | 35 lbs.   |
| Misc. fishing pole, pump, tool bag - | 14 lbs.   |
| Aviation oil, hip boots, rifle -     | 83 lbs.   |
| Oars, tarp, covers -                 | 46 lbs.   |
| Sleeping pad, bucket -               | 31 lbs.   |
| Sleeping bags -                      | 68.5 lbs. |
| Covers -                             | 19 lbs.   |
| Camp Chair/table -                   | 9 lbs.    |

Total weight that had to be removed before they could free the pilot- 694.5 lbs.

Items found in left float hatch. Some items were grouped into bag for weighing.

|                                                      |         |
|------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| Tool bag -                                           | 16 lbs. |
| 1st bag -                                            | 11 lbs. |
| Dry blanket, life vest                               | 20 lbs. |
| Bucket -                                             | 9 lbs.  |
| 2nd bag -                                            | 10 lbs. |
| 3rd bag -                                            | 20 lbs. |
| 4th bag -                                            | 9 lbs.  |
| Total estimated 95 lbs. of cargo in left float hatch |         |

Items found in airplane

|                           |         |
|---------------------------|---------|
| Battery charger -         | 23 lbs. |
| Bag, propane, hip wanders | 15 lbs. |
| Backpack fishing poles    | 11 lbs. |

Total of 838.5 lbs. of cargo.

Some smaller items remained in the airplane and paper products were not included in the total weight. Most item weights are accurate to the weight at the time of the accident, but some items were still wet and will weigh more than at the time of the accident.



**Figure 6 Cargo removed from accident airplane.**

### **3.0 Engine Examination**

Witness said engine was producing lots of power during takeoff attempt and running good during taxi. Engine was not inspected.

#### **4.0 Propeller Examination**

No Damage

#### **5.0 Witness Summary**

.

#### **6.0 Aircraft Information - Maintenance records**

Repair work was done to the floats days before the accident but was unable to determine the extent the repairs or prior issues with the floats. It is believed the pilot made the repairs to the floats.

#### **7.0 Meteorological Information**

Witness said it was a calm day and video showed that there was no wind. VFR conditions. PAFA 060153Z 00000KT 10SM FEW100 SCT200 06/M01 A2994 RMK AO2 SLP146 T00611006

Submitted by:

Mark Ward  
ASI