



National Transportation Safety Board

Office of Aviation Safety
Central Region

History of Flight Summary

NTSB Accident No:	CEN19FA008
Accident Date:	Tuesday, October 16, 2018
Accident Time:	1622 MDT
Accident Location:	Canoncito, New Mexico 35°04'16.21"N 107°02'06.94"W 5,633 ft mean sea level
Aircraft Make/Model:	Cessna 182P
Aircraft Registration:	N9326G

This History of Flight Summary is based on recorded Air Traffic Control (ATC) communications, recovered GPS track data, and witness information. This is not a full transcript of all ATC recorded communications, and some transmissions have been paraphrased or omitted for brevity.

The cross-country flight departed earlier in the day from Fullerton Municipal Airport (FUL), Fullerton, California, and made a planned fuel stop at Lake Havasu City Airport (HII), Lake Havasu City, Arizona. According to recovered GPS track data, the flight from FUL to HII was about 2 hours. The manager of the fixed base operator at HII reported that the airplane was fueled with 30.9 gallons of 100 low-lead aviation fuel before it departed.

According to ATC data and GPS track data, the flight departed HII about 1234 and climbed to an assigned cruise altitude of 19,000 ft mean sea level (msl) while continuing toward Albuquerque, New Mexico.

At 1608:25, the pilot established contact with Albuquerque Approach and reported descending through 14,600 ft msl to 10,000 ft msl. The controller relayed the current weather conditions for Double Eagle II Airport (AEG), Albuquerque, New Mexico, told the pilot to fly direct to the Albuquerque Very High Frequency Omni-Directional Range (ABQ VOR), and to expect the visual approach to runway 14 at AEG.

At 1612:19, the controller told the pilot that the airplane was on a southerly track, to turn to a 080° heading, and then resume a direct course to the ABQ VOR. At 1613:35, the controller asked the pilot to verify his heading. The pilot replied, "about seventy-two right now sir, we're going back to eighty in a minute." At 1613:43, the controller told the pilot to descend to maintain 9,000 ft msl. The pilot replied, "down to nine thousand, two six golf, yeah, we're just taking it real slow sir." At 1613:53, the controller told the pilot to advise if he was going to deviate from assigned headings. The pilot

replied, "ah, you bet, thanks, we are just going around some clouds here." The controller then approved the pilot to make heading deviations to avoid clouds and to resume a direct course to the airport when able. At 1614:16, the pilot replied, "direct to the airport after deviations for two six golf, yeah, in fact, we are just getting into some a little bit of precipitation here." The controller cleared the pilot to deviate as necessary to avoid the precipitation and to begin the descent to maintain 9,000 ft msl.

At 1616:05, as the airplane was descending through 10,000 ft msl, the pilot transmitted, "two six golf has got engine problems at this point." At 1616:14, the controller confirmed with the pilot that he was having engine issues. The pilot replied, "yes sir, um, can't really tell what's going on here." The controller replied, "ah, might be some icing, use caution there is high terrain below you, um, I-40, ah, Interstate 40 is located off your right wing and about nine, nine to ten miles." At 1616:38, the pilot replied, "yeah, we've broken out, we are under the clouds now, but, ah, yeah, I'm trying to get it to run here." The controller then told the pilot to make a right turn to a 120° heading to intercept Interstate 40. According to GPS track data, the airplane made a right turn to the east-southeast toward Interstate 40. At that point the airplane was at 9,000 ft msl, about 9.5 nautical miles (nm) west-northwest of Interstate 40, and about 16 nm west-southwest of AEG.

At 1617:33, the pilot transmitted, "and I've got my power back with the carb heat sir." At 1617:38, the controller told the pilot to maintain 8,200 ft msl because of high terrain below the airplane. At 1617:50, the pilot replied, "yeah, we will stay above eighty-two hundred, two six golf, thank you." At 1617:54, the pilot asked the controller, "can I be direct to alpha, ah, alpha echo golf right now?" The controller asked the pilot how his engine was running. The pilot replied, "right now I've got some power." The controller told the pilot that a direct course to AEG would be away from the interstate and asked if he was okay with that. At 1618:14, the pilot replied, "yeah, I think we will be okay." At 1618:20, the controller cleared the pilot direct to AEG. At that point, the airplane was about 14.5 nm west-southwest of AEG and descending through 8,200 ft msl on an east-southeast course. According to GPS track data, the airplane did not turn toward AEG and continued to the east-southeast.

At 1618:23, the controller told the pilot that there was an east/west road about 5.8 nm south of the airplane's current position. At 1618:52, the controller asked the pilot to ensure that the carburetor heat was turned on. At 1618:59, the pilot replied, "you bet, we do." At 1619:44, the controller asked if the pilot could maintain his own terrain and obstacle clearance at his current altitude. At 1619:48, the pilot replied, "yeah, I'm back to having my problems with the engine." At that point the airplane was descending through 7,600 ft msl on an east-southeast course.

At 1620:09, the controller asked the pilot of an air ambulance helicopter that was northeast of the airplane's position for assistance and issued a course change to intercept the airplane's position.

At 1620:45, the controller told the pilot that the airplane was about to descend below available radar coverage, told the pilot to climb, and issued the current altimeter setting of 30.25 inches of mercury. At 1620:58, the pilot replied, "yeah, 26G, we can't climb, I don't know what's going on, I'm gonna pick a dirt road down here somewhere [unintelligible] wind." At 1621:05, the controller replied, "Cessna two six golf, winds at the airport are out of the east at one six knots, gusting two five knots, ah, suggest you, ah, find a flat spot out there, I don't know of any flat spots there, out there, use caution, there is a lot of ravines."

At 1621:27, the controller told the pilot that the airplane was 200-300 ft above the ground. At 1621:34, the pilot stated, "yeah [unintelligible] the engine just came back on." At 1621:37, the controller told the pilot that the interstate was about 3.5 nm directly ahead of the airplane's position. There was no recorded response from the pilot. The airplane briefly climbed to about 550 ft above the ground before it resumed a descent on an easterly course. At 1622:05, the airplane entered a right turn toward the south. At 1622:16, the final GPS track point was recorded at 5,922 ft msl (about 300 ft above terrain) and about 670 ft north of the initial point-of-impact with terrain.

The controller continued to issue radar vectors to the pilot of the air ambulance helicopter until the wreckage was discovered about 1628:22. The helicopter landed at the accident site about 1630. The helicopter pilot reported that upon landing at the accident site the cloud ceiling was about 1,800 ft above ground level (agl), the surface visibility was about 8 miles with light rain, and the outside air temperature was about 5° C. The medical crew proceeded to the wreckage and confirmed that there were no survivors. The helicopter pilot observed several pieces of mixed-ice on the ground below the airplane's left wing leading edge. He described the ice pieces as being rectangular, 12-18 inches long, 4-5 inches high, and 1/4 to 3/8 inch thick. He did not observe any ice on the airplane during his brief walk around the main wreckage. The helicopter pilot noted that weather was quickly deteriorating and that he quickly returned to the helicopter to prepare for departure.