



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Office of Aviation Safety
Western Pacific Region

May 29, 2017

ACCIDENT SITE EXAMINATION SUMMARY

WPR17FA108

This document contains 5 embedded photos.

A. ACCIDENT

Location: Haines, Alaska
Date: May 27, 2017
Aircraft: N7376Y; Piper PA-30
NTSB Investigator-in-Charge: Andrew Swick

On May 27, 2017, about 1101 Alaska daylight time, a Piper PA-30, a multiengine airplane, N7376Y, collided with the ground shortly after a low-level pass over a remote airstrip at Glacier Point, 12 miles southeast of Haines, Alaska. The private pilot, and a pilot-rated passenger were fatally injured, and a rear-seated passenger sustained serious injuries. The aircraft was registered to the pilot and operated as a personal flight under the provisions of *14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91*. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and a flight plan was not filed. The flight originated from Juneau International Airport, Juneau, Alaska, about 1015 and was destined for Haines Airport, Haines, Alaska.

An eyewitness located across Lynn Canal, about 2 miles east of Glacier Point, observed the accident airplane through binoculars, flying northbound at tree top level near the airstrip. He stated the airplane reached the end of the airstrip, descended just before it banked to the right, and subsequently impacted the shoreline in a right wing-down, nose-down attitude. The airplane came to rest near the water's edge about 1/4-mile northeast of the airstrip. The eyewitness and three other people responded to the accident site by boat. About halfway across the canal, when cell coverage was available, the witness called local authorities. The eyewitness stated that the rear-seated passenger was the only occupant that was responsive when they arrived at the accident site. The witnesses reported that impact damage prevented them from extricating the rear-seat occupant from the wreckage. Within minutes, tidal water rose and submerged the airplane. A tractor was brought to the site from a local tour facility, and used to drag the airplane to shallow water. Local authorities arrived shortly thereafter and extricated the rear-seated passenger.

The rear-seated passenger was interviewed by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigator-in-charge (IIC), and reported that about 20 minutes into the flight the pilot intentionally shut down the right engine and was demonstrating how to restart the engine during flight. Despite several attempts, the engine would not rotate through with electrical power to start the engine. The pilot then made several attempts to air-start the engine by gaining altitude and diving the airplane down to use airflow to assist in rotating the engine. After two unsuccessful attempts to air-start the engine, the pilot diverted to a remote gravel airstrip at Glacier Point. The witness stated the pilot intended to land at Glacier Point and use a battery booster located in the baggage compartment to start the engine. As the airplane approached the airstrip, the pilot made a low-level pass to check the conditions at the airstrip. He concluded by stating this was his last memories of the flight.

Initial examination of the airplane by the NTSB-IIC and Federal Aviation Administration inspector revealed impact damage consistent with a right wing-down, nose-down airplane attitude during ground impact. The airplane remained intact and all flight control surfaces were accounted for and cable control continuity was attained. The landing gear was in the down

position and the landing gear position switch was also in the down position. The landing disengage motor-raise motor release arm was found in the disengaged position. The emergency landing gear extension handle was removed from its stowed position and installed in a socket on the emergency disengage control. The flaps were in the up position and the flap lever was in the down position. Both engines separated from their respective wing mounts and remained partially attached to the wings by control cables and tubing. The left propeller blades revealed gouging, twisting and material loss of one blade. The right propeller was found in the feathered position with one blade bent rearward; the opposing blade that was unremarkable. The elevator trim actuator was found in the full nose-down position, and the rudder trim indicator was in the nose left position.

The wreckage was recovered for further examination.

B. PARTICIPANTS

Andrew Swick-NTSB IIC

Jon Percy-FAA-FSDO

C. SUMMARY

Examination of the accident site was conducted on May 29, 2017. All major structural components of the airplane were located at the accident site. The wreckage was recovered to a secure location for further examination.

D. DETAILS OF THE INVESTIGATION

1.0 Accident Site Examination

Main Wreckage: N59 5.623', W-135 22.570' – Elevation: 0 feet

Accident site was about 12 miles south-southeast of Haines, Alaska

Accident site was about 58 miles northwest of Juneau, Alaska



Figure 1-Aerial View of the Accident Site

Examination of the accident site was conducted on May 29, 2017, by the NTSB-IIC, FAA-IIC and Alaska State Troopers. The examination revealed that the wreckage was located on the tidal flats near an airstrip at Glacier Point about 12 miles south of Haines, Alaska. The main wreckage was substantially damaged by impact forces and was moved from its original location away from the tidal water. Prior to the main wreckage being moved, it was contained within a small debris field of about 100 feet in length and 50 feet wide. The first identified point of contact (FIPC) was an area of disturbed rock covered beach containing three small craters all measuring about 3 feet in diameter and about 1 foot deep. The craters were about 5 feet apart from each other. The direction of the wreckage debris field was oriented on a heading of about 360 degrees magnetic from the FIPC to the separated airplane battery. Broken plexi-glass, fiberglass and bent aluminum structure was found near the FIPC. A large section of the aircraft nose was found about 100 feet from the FIPC in the tidal water. The forward right side was crushed aft.



Figure 2-Main Wreckage, Left Forward View

The cabin area roof was cut by first responders at the forward window posts to gain access during the recovery of the survivor. The forward cabin area including the instrument panel and floor structure was substantially damaged and crushed rearward into the cabin area. The pilot seat inboard structure was not attached to the seat rail.

Both yokes separated from the control columns. The glare shield separated from the instrument panel and was found near the FIPC. The instrument panel was distorted and most of the instruments remained attached. Most instruments had various degrees of damage. The right-side instrument panel gage cluster was damaged and readings were unreliable. The landing gear toggle switch was broken from the panel and was found in the down position. The emergency landing gear extension handle was removed from its stowed position and installed in a socket on the emergency disengage control. The flap switch remained attached to the panel and was found in the down position. The circuit breaker row separated from the panel mount and the HSI circuit breaker was out. The center instrument panel had separated components. The engine control quadrant remained attached to the instrument panel. The left engine throttle lever was in the full forward position. The right engine throttle lever was in the midrange position. The left propeller lever was in the midrange position. The right propeller lever was in the feathered position. The left and right mixture lever was in the midrange to rich position. The left cowl flap knob in the open (out) position and the right cowl flap was in the closed (in) position. Rudder trim indicator

was in the left of center position. The elevator trim indicator was unreliable. The right fuel selector valve handle was in the 'main' position. The left fuel selector valve handle was in between the 'aux' and 'main' positions.



Figure 3-Main Wreckage, Right Forward View

The right wing outboard section including the midsection to the tip separated from the main wreckage. A small outboard section of the aileron, about 1 foot in length, remained attached to the separated outboard wing section. The inboard section of the aileron remained attached to the main wreckage. Flight control cable continuity was established from the right aileron to the forward fuselage area. The outboard section of the flap and adjacent wing structure was crushed forward. The flap was buckled and twisted about 180 degrees at the outboard end. The right engine was located on the upper surface of the wing, inverted. The engine separated from the engine mount and remained attached to various cables, wires and tubing. The propeller spinner cap separated and was found near the FIPC. The propeller spinner dome was crushed rearward and made contact with both propeller blade shanks. The blades were found in the feathered position. One blade was bent aft near its midsection and the other was undamaged. Due to the engines position, the cowling was not removed. The landing gear was found partially removed from the retracted position. In first responder photographs, the main wreckage was supported upright by the main landing gear and empennage.



Figure 4-Left Wing

The left wing was intact and the upper surface appeared to be undamaged. The flap was in the retracted position and had minor damage from the lower side. Flight control cable continuity was established from the left aileron to the forward fuselage area. The left engine was located on the upper surface of the wing, inverted. The engine separated from the engine mount and remained attached to various cables, wires and tubing. The propeller spinner dome was crushed rearward and made contact with both propeller blade shanks. The blades were found in a near feathered position. The propeller blades revealed gouging, twisting near the tips. One of the blade's tip separated and was found near the FIPC. The landing gear was found partially retracted. In first responder photographs, the main wreckage was supported upright by the main landing gear and empennage.



Figure 5-Main Wreckage, Right Side View

The empennage remained attached to the main wreckage by cables and wires. The empennage was separated from the fuselage structure aft of the baggage compartment. The structure was buckled and twisted. The rudder and elevators remained attached and had minor damage. Flight control cable continuity was established from the rudder and elevators to the forward fuselage area. The elevator trim actuator was examined and was undamaged. There were no threads showing on the top side of the trim actuator. The ELT separated from the main wreckage and was found in the debris field. A section of the ELT housing remained attached to the antenna wire in the main wreckage.

The wreckage was relocated to Gustavus, Alaska for further examination.