



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Office of Aviation Safety

Wreckage Examination Report

September 2, 2021

A. ACCIDENT **WPR21FA352**

Location: Page, Arizona
Date: September 22, 2021
Time: 1624 MST
Operator: Private
Aircraft: Piper PA-28R-200
Registration: N3906X

B. SUMMARY

On September 22, 2021, about 1624 mountain standard time, a Piper PA-28R-200, N3906X, was substantially damaged when it was involved in an accident near Page, Arizona. The pilot was fatally injured and the passenger sustained serious injuries. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 personal flight.

Automatic dependent surveillance broadcast (ADS-B) track data obtained from the Federal Aviation Administration captured the airplane's climb out at 1211 Pacific daylight time about 1 nm north of its departure airport in San Martin, California. The mean sea level (msl) altitudes below are reported as geometric altitudes and were obtained from the ADS-B data. The airplane slowly turned to the southeast as it continued to climb. At 1302, the airplane reached a cruise altitude of about 12,000 ft msl and subsequently turned to the south about 15 minutes later, at which time it arced around the southern base of the Sequoia National Forest. At 1528, the airplane descended to about 7,700 ft msl while passing to the north of Las Vegas, Nevada. The airplane then descended further about 1615 and 30 nm west of Page Municipal Airport (PGA), Page, Arizona near the Vermilion Cliffs National Monument to about 7,250 ft msl (1,100 ft above ground level (agl)). At 1623, the airplane descended to about 6,600 ft msl where it remained until about 1623:46 when it began its final descent from 500 ft agl. The final ADS-B data point was captured at 1624:15, when the airplane was 200 ft agl and about 0.5 nm northwest of the accident site.

DETAILS OF THE INVESTIGATION

Onscene Examination

The airplane was located about 11 nm west of PGA on a mesa at a field elevation of about 6,150 ft msl. The airplane came to rest at a level attitude on a heading of 227° magnetic. The first point of impact (FPI) was identified by a 12 foot tall Juniper tree and several broken tree branches. A debris path was marked by parallel ground scars that began about 15 ft forward of the FPI and was oriented on a heading of 155° magnetic. The outboard right stabilator was located near the left side of the debris path. The main wreckage marked the end of the debris path and was located about 65 ft beyond the FPI. The nose and main landing gear collapsed and the fuselage was flush with the ground. Both wings remained attached to the fuselage; the left wing displayed a large compression wrinkle about midspan at the leading edge and the top skin. The inboard section of the right wing exhibited compression wrinkles about midspan. Both wings were punctured inboard above the right and left main landing gear. The ailerons and flaps were connected to their respective wings and were mostly undamaged with exception of the right and left flaps, both of which exhibited upward bends at the inboard trailing edges. The left side of the stabilator had advanced forward several inches in a divergent path to the right stabilator, which had moved aft. Additionally, the right stabilator leading edge was crushed aft along the outboard leading edge about midspan. The vertical stabilizer and rudder were not damaged. The cowlings and engine were displaced slightly downward, and the engine had separated from some of the upper mounts. Three propeller blades remained attached to the engine at the propeller hub. One blade was bent aft about midspan, one blade was bent at the blade root beneath the engine and the last blade was straight. Two of the propeller blades did not contain any visible chordwise scratches, nicks, or gouges. The third propeller blade was beneath the engine and could not be inspected. All major structures were accounted for at the accident site.

Flight Controls

Continuity of the right and left aileron were confirmed from the control yokes to their respective control surfaces. Partial movement of the rudder was obtained by depressing the left rudder pedals; the left seat right rudder pedal was seized. Stabilator control was continuous from the stabilator to the exposed cables aft of the rear cabin.

Cockpit/Cabin

The throttle, mixture, and propeller cockpit controls were in the full aft positions. The instrument panel was undamaged and the analog gauges and onboard Garmin GNS 430 global positioning system were intact and securely attached to the panel. Both control yokes were attached to the control column; however, the left and right handles of the left control yoke had separated consistent with overload.

ELT	ON
A/P	OFF
A/P Roll	L
NAV 1	HDG

Oil PSI	0
Oil Temp	0
Amperage	+5
CHT	OFF
Clock	3:13
A/S	0
Attitude indicator	10° up
HDG indicator	210°
Turn coordinator	Wings level
Turn and Slip	Right deflection
Altimeter	6,580 ft
Kollsman	30.12 in Hg
VSI	50 ft climb
VOR (top)	205°
VOR (bottom)	120°
Left fuel gauge	Below 0
Right fuel gauge	Below 0
Fuel pressure	0
Electric trim	Depressed
Manifold pressure	24 inches Hg
Fuel flow	0
Tachometer	0 rpm
Tach meter	7401.86
Landing gear	down
Throttle	Closed
Propeller	Full decrease
Mixture	Full lean
Alt air	Off
EGT	0
Battery	OFF
Alt	OFF
Fuel pump	OFF
DME	NAV 1
Gyro suction	0
Hobbs	1138.0
Circuit breakers	All in
Fuel selector	L
Rudder trim	unknown
Flaps	Retracted

Fuel System

The right and left wing tanks did not contain any fuel nor did they display any evidence of fuel staining. Both the left and right wing fuel strainers were closed and did not contain any fuel residue. There was no evidence of fuel staining on the ground around the wings or fuel odor. The gascolator was intact, but was not disassembled.

Baggage

The items recovered from the cargo and cabin areas of the airplane were weighed onsite.

Item Weighed	Weight (lbs)
Gas tank 1	4
Gas tank 2	4
Beach embroidered duffel bag	15
Outdoor products duffel bag (black)	24
Cooler	15
Misc bags	16
Oars	11
Boat motor (model N59.9B2, p/n 355A-1)	80
Raft (Avon 23651 L192)	117
Sleeping bag	4