

Brief of Accident

Adopted 05/11/2010

WPR09FA385
File No. 26770 08/05/2009 Napa ,CA Aircraft Reg No. N23750 Time (Local): 04:31 PDT

Make/Model: Cessna/182S
Engine Make/Model: Lycoming / IO-540-AB1A
Aircraft Damage: Substantial
Number of Engines: 1
Operating Certificate(s): None
Type of Flight Operation: Personal
Reg. Flight Conducted Under: Part 91: General Aviation

| | Fatal | Serious | Minor/None |
|------|-------|---------|------------|
| Crew | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Pass | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Last Depart. Point: Same as Accident/Incident Location
Destination: Bakersfield, CA
Airport Proximity: Off Airport/Airstrip

Condition of Light: Night/Bright
Weather Info Src: Weather Observation Facility
Basic Weather: Instrument Conditions
Lowest Ceiling: 600 Ft. AGL, Overcast
Visibility: 10.00 SM
Wind Dir/Speed: 250 / 010 kts
Temperature (°C): 13
Precip/Obscuration: No Obscuration; No Precipitation

Pilot-in-Command Age: 67
Certificate(s)/Rating(s)
Commercial; Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land

Flight Time (Hours)

Total All Aircraft: 1080
Last 90 Days: Unk/Nr
Total Make/Model: Unk/Nr
Total Instrument Time: 191

Instrument Ratings
Airplane

*** Note: NTSB investigators either traveled in support of this investigation or conducted a significant amount of investigative work without any travel, and used data obtained from various sources to prepare this aircraft accident report. ***

The instrument rated pilot was planning a cross-country flight from his home airport in low fog conditions. The pilot received an instrument flight rules (IFR) clearance about 15 minutes prior to departure from runway 18R. Witnesses reported observing the airplane pass directly over their work site at a very low altitude about 1 mile south of the airport. Recorded radar data disclosed that the airplane was airborne for about 1.5 minutes. Following departure, the airplane made a left bank while gradually increasing its altitude to 1,000 feet mean sea level (msl) to an easterly heading. The last two returns show an altitude of 900 feet msl and a slight change of direction back toward the south. The last radar return was located about 0.5 miles north of the accident site. The departure clearance dictated that the pilot was to continue straight on the runway heading of 180 degrees until intercepting a VOR radial about 6 miles from the airport. Thereafter, he was to make a left turn to join the radial and follow it to the first intersection on the departure route (about 10.25 miles south of the airport). The accident occurred during the hours of darkness with a full moon about 12.9 degrees above the horizon. A routine aviation weather report (METAR) disclosed that during the time of the accident there was an overcast cloud layer at 600 feet agl and 10 miles visibility. The pilot received an Instrument Competency Check several days prior to the accident and reportedly frequently flew with sole reference to the instruments. Ground scar analysis, impact signatures, and wreckage fragmentation patterns disclosed that the airplane impacted terrain in a near level attitude, with high forward velocity.

Brief of Accident (Continued)

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There was no evidence of a pre-mishap mechanical malfunction or failure observed during the examination of the engine or airframe.
Updated at May 10 2010 2:25PM

Brief of Accident (Continued)

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08/05/2009

Napa ,CA

Aircraft Reg No. N23750

Time (Local): 04:31 PDT

OCCURRENCES

Initial climb - Controlled flight into terr/obj (CFIT)

FINDINGS

Personnel issues-Psychological-Perception/orientation/illusio-Situational awareness-Pilot - C
Environmental issues-Conditions/weather/phenomena-Ceiling/visibility/precip-Low ceiling-Effect on personnel
Environmental issues-Conditions/weather/phenomena-Ceiling/visibility/precip-Low visibility-Effect on personnel
Environmental issues-Conditions/weather/phenomena-Light condition-(general)-Effect on personnel
Personnel issues-Action/decision-Info processing/decision-(general)-Pilot - C
Personnel issues-Task performance-Use of equip/info-Use of policy/procedure-Pilot - C

Findings Legend: (C) = Cause, (F) = Factor

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident as follows:
The instrument-rated pilot's loss of situational awareness and failure to follow the prescribed instrument departure clearance/procedure, which resulted in an in-flight collision with the terrain.