



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	AVENAL, CA	Accident Number:	LAX95FA035
Date & Time:	11/16/1994, 0240 PST	Registration:	N63995
Aircraft:	BEECH C-99	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter - Non-scheduled		

Analysis

THE PILOT WAS ON AN IFR FLIGHT PLAN LEVEL AT 10,000 FEET MSL IN VFR CONDITIONS. THE ATP RATED PILOT WAS THE SOLE OCCUPANT, AND THERE WAS NO AUTOPILOT INSTALLED IN THE BEECH C-99 AIRLINER. ABOUT 10 MINUTES AFTER A HAND-OFF FROM LOS ANGELES CENTER TO OAKLAND CENTER WAS ACKNOWLEDGED, RADAR CONTACT WAS LOST AT 0239 HOURS. A REVIEW OF THE RADAR DATA REVEALED THAT OVER THE LAST 4 MINUTES THE AIRPLANE'S ALTITUDE INCREASED TO 10,500 FEET, THEN IT STARTED A LEFT DESCENDING TURN WITH A MAXIMUM DIAMETER OF ABOUT 2.1 NM. THE LAST RADAR RETURNS INDICATE THE AIRPLANE CONTINUING THE LEFT TURN AND DESCENDING THROUGH 5,600 FEET MSL, WITH A DESCENT RATE OF ABOUT 18,000 FEET PER MINUTE. THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE OF A MECHANICAL MALFUNCTION OF THE AIRCRAFT, ENGINES, OR PROPELLERS.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: loss of aircraft control at night by the pilot for unknown reasons.

Findings

Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT
Phase of Operation: CRUISE - NORMAL

Findings

1. LIGHT CONDITION - DARK NIGHT
2. (C) AIRCRAFT CONTROL - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) REASON FOR OCCURRENCE UNDETERMINED

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Factual Information

HISTORY OF FLIGHT

On November 16, 1994, at 0240 Pacific standard time, a Beech C- 99, N63995, was destroyed following an a descent into terrain near Avenal, California. The aircraft was operated by Ameriflight, Inc., of Burbank, California, as an on-demand all cargo flight under the provisions of 14 CFR Part 135 of the Federal Aviation Regulations. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the accident. The pilot, the sole occupant of the aircraft, sustained fatal injuries. The flight originated at Burbank at 0151 as a nonstop flight to Oakland, California.

A review was made of the recorded communications between the accident airplane and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) facilities. The accident pilot acknowledged an air traffic control hand-off from Los Angeles Center to Oakland Center about 14 minutes before data was lost from the radar screen.

Also reviewed was the FAA air-to-ground communications tapes and recorded radar data from the Los Angeles and Oakland Air Route Traffic Control Centers (ARTCC). The review disclosed that the aircraft was level at its assigned cruise altitude of 10,000 feet mean sea level (msl) when the flight was handed off from the Los Angeles to the Oakland ARTCC. Approximately 11 minutes after the hand-off, the aircraft climbed 500 feet in 36 seconds, then entered a left descending turn. The Mode C information ceased at the start of the turn.

PILOT INFORMATION

The pilot held an airline transport pilot certificate. He reported a total pilot time of 5,450 hours on his first class physical dated September 1, 1994, with 400 hours flown in the past 6 months.

The morning of the accident was the pilot's second trip to Oakland from Burbank. The flight was being conducted as a single pilot operation. The first flight to Oakland had been with a copilot who deplaned at Oakland.

Unsuccessful attempts were made through family members to find a family physician or someone knowledgeable about the pilot's everyday health.

AIRPLANE INFORMATION

The airplane was maintained in accordance with an FAA Approved Airplane Inspection Program (AIP), and had accrued about 20,052 flight hours.

The airplane did not have an autopilot installed. It was configured for cargo with no seats aft of the cockpit.

A review of the airplane's cargo manifest was made in conjunction with operator-supplied loading distribution records. The operator reported that the airplane was loaded in compliance with weight and balance limitations.

RADAR INFORMATION

Enhanced radar data from the National Track Analysis Program (NTAP), and the TRACK SORT were obtained from the FAA Oakland ARTCC for the aircraft. This radar data provided the latitude, longitude, and altitude of the airplane down to 5,600 feet msl.

METEOROLOGICAL INFORMATION

The nearest official weather reporting facility was at NAS Lemoore (NLC). At 0255 hours Pacific standard time, NLC was reporting: estimated ceiling 4,000 feet broken; visibility 4 miles in fog; temperature 45 degrees Fahrenheit; dewpoint 40 degrees Fahrenheit; wind 340 degrees at 9 knots; and altimeter 30.02 inches of mercury with lower visibility was reported to the west.

Based on his recollection of the weather conditions, a company pilot flying the same route near the time of the accident reported the accident pilot was probably flying in visual flight rules (VFR) conditions.

WRECKAGE AND IMPACT INFORMATION

The aircraft structure, components, and systems were accounted for at the accident site. The control continuity was not established due to the high degree of fragmentation of the airframe.

The airplane contacted the ground with the left wing tip. The wreckage path was along a 160-degree magnetic bearing from the initial point of impact. The fragmented wreckage was found scattered over a distance of about 996 feet in a southern direction fanning outward to a width of about 475 feet.

Both engines were found separated from the wing structure and buried in separate in-line craters.

MEDICAL AND PATHOLOGICAL INFORMATION

On November 17, 1994, the Kings County Medical Examiner performed an autopsy on the pilot. The cause of death was attributed to multiple blunt force trauma.

During the course of the autopsy examination, limited samples (skeletal muscle) were obtained for toxicological analysis by the FAA Aeromedical Institute in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The analysis was contracted to the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology in Washington, D.C. The results of the limited analysis was negative for all volatiles and drugs.

TESTS AND RESEARCH

On June 13-14, 1995, both engines were examined and disassembled under the supervision of the Canadian Safety Board at the Pratt & Whitney Canada Service Investigation Facilities at St. Hubert, Quebec, Canada. According to their report, both the left and right-hand engines displayed rotational signatures to the engine's internal components. This is characteristic of the engines developing power at impact, likely in a high power range. There were no indications of any anomalies or distress to any of the engine components that would have precluded normal operation prior to impact.

On June 13, 1995, the propellers were examined and disassembled by a Hartzell Propeller Company representative at Bakersfield, California. According to the Hartzell report, the damage and impact signatures indicate that both propellers were in the governing range and had power at the time of the accident.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The airplane wreckage was released to the operator's insurance company representative on August 23, 1995.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline Transport	Age:	49, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane Multi-engine; Airplane Single-engine; Helicopter	Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	Last Medical Exam:	09/01/1994
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	4880 hours (Total, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Manufacturer:	BEECH	Registration:	N63995
Model/Series:	C-99 C-99	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	U-178
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	11/04/1994, AAIP	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	11300 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	21 Hours	Engines:	2 Turbo Prop
Airframe Total Time:	20031 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	P&W
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	PT6A-36
Registered Owner:	NATIONSBANC LEASING CORP.	Rated Power:	750 hp
Operator:	AMERIFLIGHT, INC.	Air Carrier Operating Certificate:	On-demand Air Taxi (135)
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	JIKA

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Night/Dark
Observation Facility, Elevation:	NLC, 234 ft msl	Observation Time:	0255 PST
Distance from Accident Site:	25 Nautical Miles	Direction from Accident Site:	15°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown / 0 ft agl	Temperature/Dew Point:	7° C / 4° C
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 4000 ft agl	Visibility	4 Miles
Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	9 knots, 340°	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Visibility (RVV):	0 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	BURBANK, CA (BUR)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Destination:	OAKLAND, CA (OAK)	Type of Clearance:	IFR
Departure Time:	0151 PST	Type of Airspace:	Class E

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	GEORGE E PETERSON	Adopted Date:	10/19/1995
Additional Participating Persons:	GREG J MINARIK; FRESNO, CA DON F KNUTSON; WICHITA, KS PAUL F CROSBY; FARMINGTON, NM DILIP PATEL; BURBANK, CA		
Publish Date:			
Investigation Docket:	NTSB accident and incident dockets serve as permanent archival information for the NTSB's investigations. Dockets released prior to June 1, 2009 are publicly available from the NTSB's Record Management Division at pubinq@ntsb.gov , or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/ .		

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