



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

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<b>Location:</b>	Unalakleet, AK	<b>Accident Number:</b>	ANC06LA007
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	10/24/2005, 1400 AKD	<b>Registration:</b>	N1263Y
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Cessna 208B	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	2 Minor
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Positioning		

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## Analysis

After completing a multiple leg-cargo flight, the commercial pilot was conducting a 14 CFR Part 91, positioning flight. During the flight the pilot was flying at low-level looking for animals. According to the sole passenger, while approaching a ridgeline, the pilot climbed steeply from 150 feet above ground level (agl) to 400-500 feet agl, banked to the left at 75-80 degrees, and started a descent to about 200 feet agl. The passenger said during the descent he saw the pilot look in the back of the airplane because of noise made by the seats under a cargo net. The passenger said he saw the ground coming up fast, and yelled "whoa, whoa, whoa." The pilot looked forward just in time to pull the yoke back prior to the impact with the terrain. The pilot told the director of operations for the operator that there were no mechanical problems with the airplane prior to the accident. The fuselage and wings received substantial damage during the accident.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to maintain altitude/clearance from terrain while performing a low altitude maneuver.

## Findings

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Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER  
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

### Findings

1. TERRAIN CONDITION - GROUND
2. (C) LOW ALTITUDE FLIGHT/MANEUVER - PERFORMED - PILOT IN COMMAND
3. (C) ALTITUDE/CLEARANCE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

## Factual Information

On October 24, 2005, about 1400 Alaska daylight time, a Cessna 208B airplane, N1263Y, sustained substantial damage when it collided with terrain during low level maneuvering flight, about 17 miles south of Unalakleet, Alaska. The airplane was being operated by Bering Air Inc., of Nome, Alaska, as a visual flight rules (VFR) positioning flight under Title 14, CFR Part 91, when the accident occurred. The commercial certificated pilot and sole passenger received minor injuries. The flight departed Stebbins Airport, Stebbins, Alaska, about 1345, en route to Unalakleet.

During a telephone conversation with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigator-in-charge (IIC) on October 28, the director of operations for the operator said the pilot told him he was flight-seeing on the return trip to Unalakleet, when his attention was diverted to a noise in the cabin. The pilot told him that when he redirected his attention outside, the airplane collided with the brush and tundra covered terrain. According to the director of operations, the pilot said there were no mechanical problems with the airplane. The airplane sustained structural damage to the wings and fuselage during the accident.

In a written statement to the NTSB dated November 10, the pilot wrote that he "passed over a ridgeline, and entered into a valley at low level to look for animals." He wrote that he "reduced power to slow the aircraft and nosed the aircraft forward to descend," and he "heard a noise from shifting seats in the rear of the airplane." He wrote that he "looked back to see what the noise was, and by the time I turned back to the front I only had enough time to pull back on the yoke and flare the aircraft to lessen the impact."

In a written statement to the FAA dated November 1, the passenger wrote that on the multiple leg flight, the pilot typically flew between 150 and 400 feet above ground level (agl). He wrote that during the accident flight, they had descended to 150 feet agl flying through creek ravines, banking left and right at 60-80 degrees angle of bank. He reported that just prior to the accident, they did a maneuver where the airplane climbed steeply to 400-500 feet agl, then banked left about 75-80 degrees angle of bank, while descending to about 200 feet agl. He reported that during the descent, the pilot looked in the back of the airplane because of the noise some seats under a cargo net were making. He wrote that he saw the ground coming up fast, and shouted "whoa, whoa, whoa," at which time the pilot looked forward, and pulled back on the yoke just prior to the impact with the terrain.

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	29, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 1 Without Waivers/Limitations	<b>Last Medical Exam:</b>	06/01/2005
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>		<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	04/01/2005
<b>Flight Time:</b>	2130 hours (Total, all aircraft), 740 hours (Total, this make and model), 990 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 270 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 45 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 6 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Manufacturer:</b>	Cessna	<b>Registration:</b>	N1263Y
<b>Model/Series:</b>	208B	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	No
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal; Utility	<b>Serial Number:</b>	208B0731
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Tricycle	<b>Seats:</b>	10
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	10/01/2005, AAIP	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	9062 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	100 Hours	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Turbo Prop
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	7259 Hours	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Pratt & Whitney Canada
<b>ELT:</b>	Installed, activated, aided in locating accident	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	PT6-14A
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	BERING AIR INC	<b>Rated Power:</b>	675 hp
<b>Operator:</b>	BERING AIR INC	<b>Air Carrier Operating Certificate:</b>	Commuter Air Carrier (135); On-demand Air Taxi (135)
<b>Operator Does Business As:</b>	Bering Air	<b>Operator Designator Code:</b>	FXTA

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	UNK	Observation Time:	1416 ADT
Distance from Accident Site:	15 Nautical Miles	Direction from Accident Site:	90°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 4000 ft agl	Temperature/Dew Point:	0° C / -4° C
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 5000 ft agl	Visibility	10 Miles
Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	6 knots, 310°	Visibility (RVR):	
Altimeter Setting:	29.64 inches Hg	Visibility (RVV):	
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Stebbins, AK (WBB)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	VFR
Destination:	Unalakleet, AK (PAUN)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1345 ADT	Type of Airspace:	

## Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	63.636111, -160.837222

## Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Lawrence R Lewis	Adopted Date:	04/25/2006
Additional Participating Persons:	Steve Lindsey; Fairbanks FSDO-01; Fairbanks, AK		
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 <a href="mailto:pubinq@ntsb.gov">pubinq@ntsb.gov</a> , or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at <a href="http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/">http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/</a> .		

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), established in 1967, is an independent federal agency mandated by Congress through the Independent Safety Board Act of 1974 to investigate transportation accidents, determine the probable causes of the accidents, issue safety recommendations, study transportation safety issues, and evaluate the safety effectiveness of government agencies involved in transportation. The NTSB makes public its actions and decisions through accident reports, safety studies, special investigation reports, safety recommendations, and statistical reviews.

The Independent Safety Board Act, as codified at 49 U.S.C. Section 1154(b), precludes the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an incident or accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report.