



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

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|--------------------------------|---|-------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Location:</b>               | Bettles Field, AK                             | <b>Accident Number:</b> | ANC11LA048  |
| <b>Date &amp; Time:</b>        | 05/28/2011, 1400 AKD                          | <b>Registration:</b>    | N87AW       |
| <b>Aircraft:</b>               | DEHAVILLAND DHC-3T                            | <b>Aircraft Damage:</b> | Substantial |
| <b>Defining Event:</b>         | Loss of control on ground                     | <b>Injuries:</b>        | 2 None      |
| <b>Flight Conducted Under:</b> | Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter - Non-scheduled |                         |             |

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## Analysis

The pilot was landing at a remote, private airstrip. He said the landing area was soft, and as the airplane touched down it veered to the left. His efforts to abort the landing with the runway remaining was unsuccessful. The airplane exited the right side of the landing area and collided with a fuel tank farm. The airplane sustained substantial damage to the right wing, aileron, and the fuselage. The pilot said there were no mechanical malfunctions with the airplane that would have precluded normal operation.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's selection of unsuitable terrain for the landing, which resulted in a loss of directional control.

## Findings

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|-----------------------------|---|
| <b>Aircraft</b>             | Directional control - Not attained/maintained (Cause) |
| <b>Personnel issues</b>     | Aircraft control - Pilot (Cause)                      |
| <b>Environmental issues</b> | Soft surface - Contributed to outcome                 |

## Factual Information

On May 28, 2011, about 1400 Alaska daylight time, a De Havilland DHC-3T airplane, N87AW, sustained substantial damage during landing at a private airstrip, about 80 miles northwest of Bettles Field, Alaska. The airplane was being operated by Alaska West Air, Kenai, Alaska, as a visual flight rules (VFR) passenger flight under 14 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 135, when the accident occurred. The commercial pilot and sole passenger were not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and company flight following procedures were in effect. The flight departed Coldfoot, Alaska, about 1300.

During a telephone conversation with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigator-in-charge (IIC) on May 29, the director of operations for the operator said the airplane ran off the end of the runway into a fuel tank farm. He said the airplane's right wing and aileron were damaged when the airplane struck a fuel storage tank. No mechanical anomalies prior to the accident were reported by the pilot.

In a written statement to the NTSB dated August 1, the pilot said the landing area was soft, and after touching down the airplane veered a little to the left, and he corrected to the right. When he attempted to come back to the left, he didn't have enough rudder and brake authority to bring the airplane to the left, and not enough runway remaining to abort the landing. He was unable to stop the airplane before it collided with fuel spill equipment.

## History of Flight

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>Landing-landing roll</b> | Loss of control on ground (Defining event)<br>Runway excursion<br>Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT) |
|-----------------------------|--|

## Pilot Information

|                                  |   |  |                            |
|----------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------|
| <b>Certificate:</b>              | Commercial  | <b>Age:</b>                              | 52, 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>     | Airplane Single-engine  | <b>Toxicology Performed:</b>             | No                         |
| <b>Medical Certification:</b>    | Class 2 With Waivers/Limitations  | <b>Last Medical Exam:</b>                | 05/13/2011                 |
| <b>Occupational Pilot:</b>       | Yes   | <b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b> | 05/26/2011                 |
| <b>Flight Time:</b>              | 9000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1500 hours (Total, this make and model), 2000 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 55 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 30 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft) |  |                            |

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

|                               |                               |                                    |                          |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Aircraft Manufacturer:        | DEHAVILLAND                   | Registration:                      | N87AW                    |
| Model/Series:                 | DHC-3T                        | Aircraft Category:                 | Airplane                 |
| Year of Manufacture:          |                               | Amateur Built:                     | No                       |
| Airworthiness Certificate:    | Normal                        | Serial Number:                     | 52                       |
| Landing Gear Type:            | Tailwheel                     | Seats:                             | 11                       |
| Date/Type of Last Inspection: | 05/20/2011, Annual            | Certified Max Gross Wt.:           | 8367 lbs                 |
| Time Since Last Inspection:   |                               | Engines:                           | 1 Turbo Prop             |
| Airframe Total Time:          | 24169 Hours                   | Engine Manufacturer:               | Pratt & Whitney          |
| ELT:                          | C126 installed, not activated | Engine Model/Series:               | PT6A                     |
| Registered Owner:             | SUMMIT LEASING LLC            | Rated Power:                       | 750 hp                   |
| Operator:                     | ALASKA WEST AIR INC           | Air Carrier Operating Certificate: | On-demand Air Taxi (135) |
| Operator Does Business As:    | Alaska West Air               | Operator Designator Code:          | LCWC                     |

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

|                                  |                     |                               |             |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|
| Conditions at Accident Site:     | Visual Conditions   | Condition of Light:           | Day         |
| Observation Facility, Elevation: |                     | Observation Time:             |             |
| Distance from Accident Site:     |                     | Direction from Accident Site: |             |
| Lowest Cloud Condition:          | Clear               | Temperature/Dew Point:        |             |
| Lowest Ceiling:                  | None                | Visibility                    | 100 Miles   |
| Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:     | 7 knots, 180°       | Visibility (RVR):             |             |
| Altimeter Setting:               |                     | Visibility (RVV):             |             |
| Precipitation and Obscuration:   |                     |                               |             |
| Departure Point:                 | Coldfoot, AK (PACX) | Type of Flight Plan Filed:    | Company VFR |
| Destination:                     | Bettles Field, AK   | Type of Clearance:            | None        |
| Departure Time:                  | 1300 ADT            | Type of Airspace:             |             |

## Airport Information

|                      |                 |                           |                            |
|----------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Airport:             | Sun Private     | Runway Surface Type:      | Gravel                     |
| Airport Elevation:   | 3500 ft         | Runway Surface Condition: | Soft                       |
| Runway Used:         |                 | IFR Approach:             | None                       |
| Runway Length/Width: | 1500 ft / 75 ft | VFR Approach/Landing:     | Full Stop; Traffic Pattern |

## Wreckage and Impact Information

|                            |        |                             |                        |
|----------------------------|--------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Crew Injuries:</b>      | 1 None | <b>Aircraft Damage:</b>     | Substantial            |
| <b>Passenger Injuries:</b> | 1 None | <b>Aircraft Fire:</b>       | None                   |
| <b>Ground Injuries:</b>    | N/A    | <b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>  | None                   |
| <b>Total Injuries:</b>     | 2 None | <b>Latitude, Longitude:</b> | 67.916667, -153.133333 |

## Administrative Information

|  |   |                      |            |
|--|---|----------------------|------------|
| <b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>     | Lawrence Lewis  | <b>Adopted Date:</b> | 10/04/2011 |
| <b>Additional Participating Persons:</b> | Bryce Banning; FAA FSDO-01; Fairbanks, AK   |                      |            |
| <b>Publish Date:</b>                     | 10/04/2011  |                      |            |
| <b>Investigation Docket:</b>             | <a href="http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=80785">http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=80785</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.