



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Tyonek, Alaska	Accident Number:	ANC23LA066
Date & Time:	August 15, 2023, 13:30 Local	Registration:	N3995Z
Aircraft:	Piper PA-18-150	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Dragged wing/rotor/float/other	Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot reported that, during climb-out from a remote airstrip, he encountered an abrupt wind shift and windshear. According to the pilot, the airplane was unable to gain altitude and was eventually “forced” into the ground, causing substantial damage to the left wing, left horizontal stabilizer, and fuselage. The pilot reported that there were no pre-accident mechanical failures or 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 encounter with windshear during the initial climb, which resulted in a loss of control.

Findings

Personnel issues	Weather planning - Pilot
Personnel issues	Identification/recognition - Pilot
Environmental issues	Windshear - Contributed to outcome
Aircraft	Climb rate - Not attained/maintained

Factual Information

History of Flight

Takeoff	Dragged wing/rotor/float/other (Defining event)
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Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	63,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Unknown
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	October 20, 2021
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	September 24, 2022
Flight Time:	596 hours (Total, all aircraft), 545.8 hours (Total, this make and model), 524 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft)		

Passenger Information

Certificate:		Age:	Male
Airplane Rating(s):		Seat Occupied:	Center
Other Aircraft Rating(s):		Restraint Used:	Unknown
Instrument Rating(s):		Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):		Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:		Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:			

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N3995Z
Model/Series:	PA-18-150	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1963	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	18-7944
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	April 15, 2023 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1750 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	56.1 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	7524.1 Hrs	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-320
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	150 Horsepower
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	ANC, 125 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	36 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	12:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	83°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 1000 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 20000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	3 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	None / None
Wind Direction:	30°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	N/A / N/A
Altimeter Setting:	29.78 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	16°C / 11°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Tyonek, AK	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Chugiak, AK (PABV)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 None	Latitude, Longitude:	61.405506,-151.71058

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Rasmussen, Mitchell
Additional Participating Persons:	Paula Huckleberry; Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) ; Wasilla , AK
Original Publish Date:	April 4, 2024
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class 4
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=192958

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant events in other modes of transportation—railroad, transit, highway, marine, pipeline, and commercial space. We determine the probable causes of the accidents and events we investigate, and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future occurrences. In addition, we conduct transportation safety research studies and offer information and other assistance to family members and survivors for each accident or event we investigate. We also serve as the appellate authority for enforcement actions involving aviation and mariner certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and US Coast Guard, and we adjudicate appeals of civil penalty actions taken by the FAA.

The NTSB does not assign fault or blame for an accident or incident; rather, as specified by NTSB regulation, “accident/incident investigations are fact-finding proceedings with no formal issues and no adverse parties ... and are not conducted for the purpose of determining the rights or liabilities of any person” (Title 49 *Code of Federal Regulations* section 831.4). Assignment of fault or legal liability is not relevant to the NTSB’s statutory mission to improve transportation safety by investigating accidents and incidents and issuing safety recommendations. In addition, statutory language prohibits the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report (Title 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b)). A factual report that may be admissible under 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b) is available [here](#).