



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	St. Anthony, North Dakota	Accident Number:	CEN23LA210
Date & Time:	May 30, 2023, 07:44 Local	Registration:	N7343L
Aircraft:	Piper PA-18-150	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)	Injuries:	2 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Public aircraft		

Analysis

The pilot reported that while conducting wildlife damage management activities under contract with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, he entered a right 180-degree turn in order to reverse direction and position the airplane.

The airplane heading prior to the turn was into a slight right quartering headwind and required a climb due to up-sloping terrain. About 160 degrees into the right turn, the right quartering headwind became a left quartering tailwind. The airplane descended and contacted the ground. On contact, the nose of the airplane pitched forward and struck the ground. The airplane then bounced, cartwheeled, and came to rest approximately 105 ft from the initial ground contact, resulting in substantial damage to the fuselage, both wings, and the empennage.

The pilot reported that there were no preaccident 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 failure to maintain clearance from terrain while maneuvering at low attitude.

Findings

Personnel issues	Aircraft control - Pilot
Environmental issues	Tailwind - Contributed to outcome
Aircraft	Altitude - Not attained/maintained

Factual Information

History of Flight

Maneuvering-low-alt flying	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT) (Defining event)
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Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Flight instructor	Age:	30, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Lap only
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane multi-engine	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	December 1, 2022
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	January 21, 2023
Flight Time:	3939 hours (Total, all aircraft), 815 hours (Total, this make and model), 3834 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 300 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 100 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N7343L
Model/Series:	PA-18-150	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1975	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	18-7509049
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	March 25, 2023 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1750 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	96.7 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	13075.5 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	C91 installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-320-B2B
Registered Owner:	AIR DAKOTA FLITE INC	Rated Power:	150 Horsepower
Operator:	AIR DAKOTA FLITE INC	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KBIS, 1660 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	13 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	07:52 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	36°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29.8 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	15°C / 13°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Mandan, ND (Y19)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	Company VFR
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	05:44 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	2 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	46.5983,-100.9408

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Brown, Zane
Additional Participating Persons:	Perry Ochsner; FAA Fargo FSDO; Fargo, ND
Original Publish Date:	October 17, 2023
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=192271

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](#).