



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	PEACH SPRINGS, AZ	Accident Number:	DCA83AA034
Date & Time:	08/17/1983, 1227 MST	Registration:	N88LV
Aircraft:	PIPER PA-31-350	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:		Injuries:	10 Fatal

Flight Conducted Under: Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter - Scheduled

Analysis

THE ACFT DEPARTED LAS VEGAS, NV AS THE 2ND OF 5 ACFT ON A SCHEDULED GRAND CANYON SIGHT-SEEING FLT. THE 1ST PORTION OF THE FLT WAS OVER THE LAS VEGAS STRIP AREA & LAKE MEAD & WAS UNEVENTFUL. HOWEVER, WX CONDITIONS PRECLUDED THE PLT FROM CONTINUING OVER THE SHIVWITS PLATEAU. RADIO CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN THE PLT & OTHER COMPANY AIRCREWS INDICATED THAT THE PLT OF N88LV HAD ENCOUNTERED DETERIORATING WX CONDITIONS IN THE CANYON & THAT HE HAD DECIDED TO ABORT THE FLT & CLIMB OUT. LATER ATTEMPTS TO CONTACT THE ACFT WERE UNSUCCESSFUL. THE WRECKAGE WAS FOUND ON 8/18/83 WHERE THE ACFT HAD COLLIDED ON THE WEST WALL OF A MESA INSIDE THE CANYON. A HELICOPTER PLT FLYING ABOUT 14 MI NORTH OF THE CRASH SITE REPORTED CLOUDS AT GROUND LEVEL (4500 FT MSL). THE ELEVATION OF THE ACCIDENT SITE WAS 6320 FT. SHORTLY BEFORE HIS LAST TRANSMISSION, THE PLT STATED HE WAS 'JUST SHORT OF TWIN PEAKS.' THE PLT HAD TRANSMITTED HIS POSITION FROM PEACH VOR, INDICATING HE WAS IN THE AREA OF THE CRASH SITE. TWIN PEAKS WAS NORTHEAST & HAD SIMILAR TERRAIN.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER
Phase of Operation: CRUISE - NORMAL

Findings

1. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - CLOUDS
2. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - MOUNTAINOUS/HILLY
3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - LOW CEILING
4. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - RAIN
5. (C) VFR FLIGHT INTO IMC - CONTINUED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: CLIMB

Factual Information

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline Transport	Age:	48, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Glider	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):		Toxicology Performed:	Yes
Medical Certification:	None Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	07/27/1983
Occupational Pilot:		Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	8099 hours (Total, all aircraft), 1782 hours (Total, this make and model), 7266 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 160 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 6 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Manufacturer:	PIPER	Registration:	N88LV
Model/Series:	PA-31-350 PA-31-350	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	31-7752118
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	10
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	08/07/1983, AAIP	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	7000 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	44 Hours	Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	4325 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	L/TIO-540-J
Registered Owner:		Rated Power:	350 hp
Operator:	LAS VEGAS AIRLINES	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	Commuter Air Carrier (135)

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	GCN, 6000 ft msl	Observation Time:	1245 PDT
Distance from Accident Site:	66 Nautical Miles	Direction from Accident Site:	255°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Unknown / 0 ft agl	Temperature/Dew Point:	18° C / -18° C
Lowest Ceiling:	Unknown / 0 ft agl	Visibility	20 Miles
Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:		Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Visibility (RVV):	0 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	LAS VEGAS, NV (VGT)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	Company VFR
Destination:	GRAND CANYON, AZ (GCN)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	0000	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	GRAND CANYON (GCN)	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:		Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	0	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	9 Fatal	Aircraft Fire:	On-Ground
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	10 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	GERALD T MCCARTHY	Adopted Date:	
Additional Participating Persons:			
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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