National Transportation Safety Board Washington, DC 20594

Brief of Accident

Adopted 02/28/2000

MIA98FA045 File No. 1630 12/24/1997 RALEIGH-DURHAM, NC Aircraft Reg No. N12172 Time (Local): 20:08 EST Make/Model: Cessna/172M Fatal Serious Minor/None Engine Make/Model: Lycoming / O-360A4M Crew 1 0 0 Aircraft Damage: Destroyed Pass 0 0 0 Number of Engines: 1 Operating Certificate(s): None Type of Flight Operation: Personal Reg. Flight Conducted Under: Part 91: General Aviation Last Depart. Point: Same as Accident/Incident Location Condition of Light: Night/Dark Destination: FLORENCE, SC Weather Info Src: Weather Observation Facility Airport Proximity: Off Airport/Airstrip Basic Weather: Instrument Conditions Lowest Ceiling: 400 Ft. AGL, Overcast Visibility: 6.00 SM Wind Dir/Speed: 100 / 009 kts Temperature (°C): 8 Precip/Obscuration:

Pilot-in-Command Age: 42

Certificate(s)/Rating(s)
Private; Single-engine Land

Instrument Ratings
Airplane

Flight Time (Hours)

Total All Aircraft: 700 Last 90 Days: Unk/Nr Total Make/Model: Unk/Nr Total Instrument Time: UnK/Nr

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*** Note: NTSB investigators either traveled in support of this investigation or conducted a significant amount of investigative work without any travel, and used data obtained from various sources to prepare this aircraft accident report. ***

The single piloted Cessna 172, (N12172) launched into 400 feet overcast, 6 miles visibility in light rain and fog weather conditions, at night, and when queried by the Raleigh-Durham departure controller what his heading was, he responded, '172 has got uh a vacuum problem'. Contrary to departure instructions to commence a right turn after take-off, N12172 entered a left turn after take-off that continued for 2 1/2 minutes until ground impact about 1.3 miles northwest of the airport.

Brief of Accident (Continued)

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Occurrence #1: LOSS OF CONTROL - IN FLIGHT Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - INITIAL CLIMB

Findings

1. (C) REASON FOR OCCURRENCE UNDETERMINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: DESCENT - UNCONTROLLED

Findings

2. LIGHT CONDITION - DARK NIGHT

3. WEATHER CONDITION - LOW CEILING

4. TERRAIN CONDITION - WET

Findings Legend: (C) = Cause, (F) = Factor

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident as follows:
Was loss of control of the airplane on initial climb after entering instrument flight conditions resulting in a turn opposite in direction from that given by ATC, and eventual collision with terrain.