

Brief of Accident

Adopted 05/21/2002

MIA00FA229
File No. 11676 07/31/2000 RALEIGH ,NC Aircraft Reg No. N201RH Time (Local): 00:34 EDT

Make/Model: De Havilland/DHC-6-200
Engine Make/Model: P&W Canada / PT6A-27
Aircraft Damage: Destroyed
Number of Engines: 2
Operating Certificate(s): None
Type of Flight Operation: Positioning
Reg. Flight Conducted Under: Part 91: General Aviation

	Fatal	Serious	Minor/None
Crew	1	0	0
Pass	0	1	1

Last Depart. Point: HINCKLEY, IL
Destination: LOUISBURG, NC
Airport Proximity: Off Airport/Airstrip

Condition of Light: Night/Dark
Weather Info Src: Weather Observation Facility
Basic Weather: Visual Conditions
Lowest Ceiling: 500 Ft. AGL, Broken
Visibility: 6.00 SM
Wind Dir/Speed: 140 / 006 kts
Temperature (°C): 23
Precip/Obscuration:

Pilot-in-Command Age: 45

Flight Time (Hours)

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

Total All Aircraft: 1725
Last 90 Days: 207
Total Make/Model: 147
Total Instrument Time: 22

Instrument Ratings
None

*** 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 flight had proceeded without incident until a visual approach was made to the destination airport, but a landing was not completed because of poor visibility due to ground fog. The pilot then requested vectors to another airport, and was advised by ATC that he was below radar coverage, and he could not be radar identified. The pilot stated he would proceed to a third airport; he was given a heading, instructed to proceed direct to the airport, and report the field in sight. He was told to over-fly the airport, and might be able to descend through a clearing in the clouds. An inbound air carrier flight reported instrument meteorological conditions on the final approach to a parallel runway. At a location of 1.13 miles east of the airport, the flight, for no apparent reason, turned south, away from the airport. The last radio contact with pilot was after ATC told him his heading was taking him away from the airport and he said he was turning back. The last known position of N201RH was 1.95 miles southeast of the airport, at 500 feet MSL. According to the statement of the passenger that was sitting in the co-pilot's seat, "...all we could see were city lights and darkness underneath us. We were in a right turn, when I saw the trees and subsequently hit it." According to the pilot's log book and FAA records revealed a limitation on his commercial pilot certificate prohibited him from carrying passengers for hire at night and on cross-country flights of more than 50 nautical miles. The records did not show any instrument rating.

Brief of Accident (Continued)

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As per the entries in his personal flight logbook, he had accumulated a total of 1,725.2 total flight hours, 1,550.9 total single engine flight hours, and 184.3 total flight hours in multi-engine aircraft of which 145.6 hours were in this make and model airplane. In addition, the logbooks showed that he had a total of 487.3 cross country flight hours, 61.9 total night flight hours, and 21.6 simulated instrument flight hours.

Brief of Accident (Continued)

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Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER
Phase of Operation: APPROACH - VFR PATTERN - FINAL APPROACH

Findings

1. (F) LIGHT CONDITION - DARK NIGHT
 2. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - FOG
 3. (C) VFR FLIGHT INTO IMC - CONTINUED - PILOT IN COMMAND
 4. (C) ALTITUDE/CLEARANCE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
 5. (F) LACK OF CERTIFICATION - PILOT IN COMMAND
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Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH OBJECT
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING - TURN TO REVERSE DIRECTION

Findings

6. OBJECT - TREE(S)
7. TERRAIN CONDITION - ROUGH/UNEVEN

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

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident as follows:
the pilot's continued VFR flight into IMC conditions, by failing to maintain altitude, and descending from VFR conditions into IMC, which resulted in him subsequently impacting with trees. Factors in this accident were: reduced visibility due to dark night and fog. An additional factor was the pilot was not certified for instrument flight.