



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	Kotzebue, AK	Accident Number:	ANC09LA019
Date & Time:	02/14/2009, 1102 AST	Registration:	N440RA
Aircraft:	CONSTRUCCIONES AERONAUTICAS SA C-212-CC	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Controlled flight into terr/obj (CFIT)	Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter - Non-scheduled		

Analysis

The airline transport certificated captain and commercial certificated first officer were on a non-scheduled domestic cargo flight. The captain stated that while en route to the destination airport, the weather at the airport dropped below visual flight rules (VFR) minimums, and he received a special VFR clearance. He said that the local area and runway were covered with snow, but when he turned final he could see the airport beacon and associated buildings. He said about 200 feet above the ground on approach he lost sight of the runway environment, and asked the first officer if he could see anything. When the first officer said no, and reported their altitude at 50 feet agl, the captain said he initiated a go-around, but the airplane impacted the terrain short of the runway. The captain reported that there were no known mechanical problems with the airplane or its instruments prior to the accident. The Director of Operations for the operator said the airplane sustained structural damage to the fuselage near the left main landing gear. An Federal Aviation Administration flight service specialist at the airport said the visibility had been about 1-1/4 miles, but dropped to 1/4-mile rapidly during the time of the approach. Weather observations taken at the airport showed that about 3 minutes before the accident, the visibility was 1 mile in light snow and blowing snow, wind as 160 degrees at 28 knots gusting to 32. About 1 minute before the accident, the visibility was reported as 1/4-mile in light snow and blowing snow, wind from 160 degrees at 33 knots gusting to 36. About 3 minutes after the accident, the visibility remained at 1/4-mile in light snow and blowing snow, and the wind was reported as 170 degrees at 35 knots with gusts to 42.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The flight crew's decision to continue flight into adverse weather. Contributing to the accident was blowing snow which limited their visibility during final approach to land.

Findings

Personnel issues	Action/decision - Flight crew (Cause)
Environmental issues	Snow - Decision related to condition (Cause) Visibility - Effect on personnel (Factor) Snow - Effect on operation (Factor)

Factual Information

On February 14, about 1102 Alaska standard time, a CASA 212 twin-engine airplane, N440RA, sustained substantial damage when it collided with terrain about one-half mile west of the Ralph Wien Memorial Airport, Kotzebue, Alaska. The airplane was being operated by Arctic Transportation Services, Anchorage, Alaska, as a visual flight rules (VFR) cargo flight under Title 14, CFR Part 135, when the accident occurred. The airline transport pilot and co-pilot were not injured. Instrument meteorological conditions prevailed at the airport, and a special VFR clearance had been obtained by the flight crew.

During a telephone conversation with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigator-in-charge (IIC) on February 17, the pilot said he flew a normal VFR left-hand traffic pattern. He said that the area and runway were covered with snow, but when he turned final he could see the airport beacon and associated buildings. He said as he continued the approach, the co-pilot called an altitude of 200 feet, and as he did so, the wind appeared to shift abruptly. The pilot said he lost sight of the airport, and asked the co-pilot if he could see the airport. When the co-pilot said no, and reported their altitude as 50 feet above ground level, the pilot said he initiated a go-around, but the airplane impacted terrain short of the runway. The pilot said there were no known mechanical problems with the airplane or its instruments prior to the accident. He also said he and the co-pilot were instrument current, and the airplane was properly certified for instrument flight. The Director of Operations for the operator said the airplane sustained structural damage to the fuselage near the left main landing gear.

An FAA flight service specialist at the airport said the visibility had been about 1 1/4 miles, but dropped to 1/4 mile rapidly during the time of the approach. According to official weather observations taken by the weather observer at Kotzebue, at 59 minutes before the hour the visibility was 1 mile in light snow and blowing snow, wind was 160 degrees at 28 knots gusting to 32. At 1 minute after the hour the visibility was reported as 1/4 mile in light snow and blowing snow, wind from 160 degrees at 33 knots gusting to 36. At 5 minutes past the hour the visibility remained at 1/4 mile in light snow and blowing snow, and the wind was reported as 170 degrees at 35 knots with gusts to 42.

History of Flight

Enroute	VFR encounter with IMC
Approach-VFR pattern final	Controlled flight into terr/obj (CFIT) (Defining event)

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline Transport	Age:	27, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 1 Without Waivers/Limitations	Last Medical Exam:	09/02/2008
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	01/19/2009
Flight Time:	6377 hours (Total, all aircraft), 4020 hours (Total, this make and model), 3910 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 227 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 59 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Co-Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Glider	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	Yes
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 1 With Waivers/Limitations	Last Medical Exam:	04/08/2008
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	04/29/2008
Flight Time:	1229 hours (Total, all aircraft), 862 hours (Total, this make and model), 228 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 138 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 32 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Manufacturer:	CONSTRUCCIONES AERONAUTICAS SA	Registration:	N440RA
Model/Series:	C-212-CC	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	174
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	28
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	01/21/2009, AAIP	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	2 Turbo Prop
Airframe Total Time:	29161 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	Honeywell
ELT:	C91A installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	TPE-331-10R-5
Registered Owner:	ARCTIC TRANSPORTATION SERVICES INC	Rated Power:	900 hp
Operator:	ARCTIC TRANSPORTATION SERVICES INC	Air Carrier Operating Certificate:	On-demand Air Taxi (135)
Operator Does Business As:	Arctic Transportation Services	Operator Designator Code:	UATA

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	PAQT, 14 ft msl	Observation Time:	1101 AST
Distance from Accident Site:		Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 1000 ft agl	Temperature/Dew Point:	-3° C / -4° C
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 4900 ft agl	Visibility	0.25 Miles
Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	28 knots/ 32 knots, 160°	Visibility (RVR):	
Altimeter Setting:	29.6 inches Hg	Visibility (RVV):	
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Kiana, AK (PAIK)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	Company VFR
Destination:	Kotzebue (PAQT)	Type of Clearance:	Special VFR
Departure Time:	1040 AST	Type of Airspace:	

Airport Information

Airport:	Kotzebue (PAQT)	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	14 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	N/A	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	Full Stop; Traffic Pattern

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	2 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 None	Latitude, Longitude:	66.884722, -162.598611

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Lawrence Lewis	Adopted Date:	05/12/2009
Additional Participating Persons:	Mike Alkana; FAA; Fairbanks, AK		
Publish Date:	08/04/2011		
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.ntsbt.gov/pubdms/ .		

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