



Aviation Investigation Preliminary Report

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| Location: | Cordova, AK | Accident Number: | ANC23LA002 |
| Date & Time: | October 16, 2022, 14:27 Local | Registration: | N3432W |
| Aircraft: | Piper PA-32-260 | Injuries: | 1 Fatal |
| Flight Conducted Under: | Part 91: General aviation - Positioning | | |

On October 16, 2022, about 1427 Alaska standard time (AST), a Piper PA-32-260 Cherokee Six airplane, N3432W was substantially damaged when it was involved in an accident about 5 miles South of Cordova, Alaska. The pilot was fatally injured. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91 personal flight.

The pilot had departed from the Yakutat Airport (YAK), Yakutat, and was traveling along the coast to the Birchwood Airport (BCV) Chugiak, Alaska.

According to Flight Service Station (FSS) personnel, shortly before the accident, the pilot was talking to an FSS specialist requesting updated weather information for the Anchorage area when the conversation abruptly stopped, and an Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT) signal was received on 121.5 MHz. No further communications were received from the accident airplane.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) issued an Alert Notice (ALNOT) at 1450 AST, and search and rescue procedures were initiated. However, poor weather conditions hampered search and rescue efforts. The crew of a US Coast Guard MH-60 Jayhawk helicopter eventually located the airplane wreckage along a steep mountain side at an elevation of about 1,866 ft. However, due to poor weather conditions and steep terrain, they were unable to land or lower a Coast Guard rescue swimmer to the site.

On October 17, the crew of an Alaska Air National Guard HH-60 helicopter was able to access the site by hiking in and confirmed that the pilot did not survive the accident.

A detailed wreckage examination is pending following the recovery of the wreckage.

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

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|----------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Aircraft Make: | Piper | Registration: | N3432W |
| Model/Series: | PA-32-260 | Aircraft Category: | Airplane |
| Amateur Built: | | | |
| Operator: | | Operating Certificate(s) Held: | On-demand air taxi (135) |
| Operator Designator Code: | | | |

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

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|---|----------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Conditions at Accident Site: | Unknown | Condition of Light: | Day |
| Observation Facility, Elevation: | PACV,48 ft msl | Observation Time: | 14:23 Local |
| Distance from Accident Site: | 11 Nautical Miles | Temperature/Dew Point: | 11°C /9°C |
| Lowest Cloud Condition: | | Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction: | 14 knots / 24 knots, 110° |
| Lowest Ceiling: | Broken / 1000 ft AGL | Visibility: | 10 miles |
| Altimeter Setting: | 29.5 inches Hg | Type of Flight Plan Filed: | VFR |
| Departure Point: | Yakutat, AK (PAYA) | Destination: | Birchwood, AK (PABV) |

Wreckage and Impact Information

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|----------------------------|---------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Crew Injuries: | 1 Fatal | Aircraft Damage: | Substantial |
| Passenger Injuries: | | Aircraft Fire: | None |
| Ground Injuries: | | Aircraft Explosion: | None |
| Total Injuries: | 1 Fatal | Latitude, Longitude: | 60.46441,-145.82206 (est) |

Administrative Information

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| Investigator In Charge (IIC): | Ward, Mark |
| Additional Participating Persons: | Pete Alexakis; FAA; Juneau, AK |
| Note: | The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident. |