



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Preliminary Report

Location:	Ketchikan, AK	Accident Number:	ANC21FA069
Date & Time:	August 5, 2021, 10:50 Local	Registration:	N1249K
Aircraft:	DEHAVILLAND DHC-2 MK.I	Injuries:	6 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 135: Air taxi & commuter - Non-scheduled - Sightseeing		

On August 5, 2021, about 1050 Alaska daylight time, a DeHavilland DHC-2, N1249K, was destroyed when it was involved in an accident near Ketchikan, Alaska. The airline transport pilot and five passengers were fatally injured. The airplane was operated by Southeast Aviation, LLC, as a Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 135 on-demand sightseeing flight.

On the morning of the accident, an airplane fueler noted that the pilot performed a preflight inspection of the airplane and then asked the fueler to fuel the airplane so that the front tank was full (35 gallons) and the center tank was filled to 20 gallons of fuel. The pilot departed on the first passenger flight of the day about 0752 and returned to the dock about 0921. He again asked the fueler to fill and top off the front tank and fill the center tank to 20 gallons (totaling 55 gallons of fuel). Then, the pilot departed on the second passenger flight of the day, the accident flight, about 0939.

The airplane was equipped with a Spidertracks flight tracking system, which provides real-time aircraft flight tracking data. The flight tracking information is transmitted via Iridium satellites to an internet-based storage location, at one-minute intervals. The first part of the flight the airplane flew through the Misty Fjord Monument and landed on Big Goat Lake about 1018. Then at 1027, the airplane departed the lake and was en route to return to Ketchikan Harbor. The last satellite tracking system transmission from the airplane was at 1048; when the airplane was at an altitude of 1,730 ft mean sea level (msl) and on a ground track of 261° true.

About 1050, the United States Coast Guard (USCG) Alaska received a 406 Mhz emergency locator transmitter (ELT) signal assigned to the accident airplane. After being notified of an overdue airplane and after learning about reports of an ELT signal along the accident pilot's anticipated flight route, search and rescue personnel from the U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Sitka and Temsco Helicopters, Inc. began searching for the missing airplane. The airplane was located about 1120 and USCG rescue personnel reached the accident site later that afternoon and confirmed that there were no survivors.

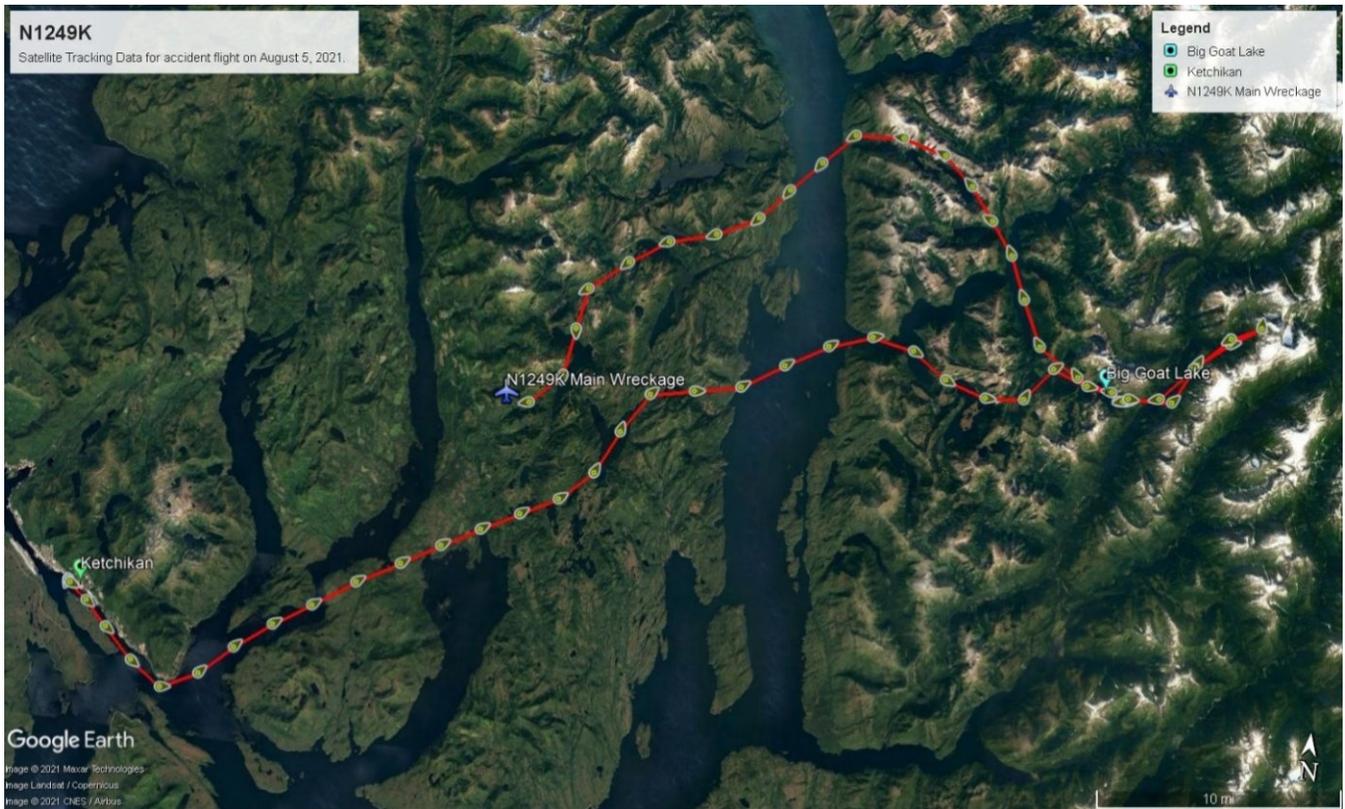


Figure 1. Satellite Tracking Data for Accident Flight. Red line depicts route of accident flight and arrows point in the direction of travel.

The airplane impacted heavily wooded, mountainous terrain about 18 miles northwest of Ketchikan, Alaska, and 1.46 miles from the last satellite tracking system point at an elevation of about 1,750 ft msl. The airplane initially impacted a tree about 435 ft from the main wreckage location, and the outboard section of the left wing was located at the base of the tree. The inboard section of the left wing was located in a tree along the debris path, which had a heading of 242°. All major components of the airplane were located in the vicinity of the main wreckage.



Figure 2. Aerial view of airplane at the accident site.

The fuselage came to rest on the left side and was impact crushed. The right wing remained attached to the fuselage. The outboard section of the right wing was impact separated but remained attached through a cable. The empennage remained attached to the fuselage and was impact damaged. The rudder and vertical stabilizer remained attached to the empennage, but the vertical stabilizer tip was separated. The left horizontal stabilizer and elevator were impact separated. The right horizontal stabilizer remained attached to the empennage and exhibited leading edge damage. The right elevator was impact separated. The floats were impact separated. The forward section of the left float was impact damaged. Flight control continuity was confirmed from the flight controls in the cockpit to all flight control surfaces.

The airplane was equipped with a Pratt & Whitney R-985 series engine. The engine remained attached to the airframe though several of the engine mounts were separated and the engine exhibited damage signatures consistent with impact damage. The oil sump was impact

damaged and had a hole in it. Fuel was noted in the line from the firewall to the engine. A detailed engine examination is pending.

The airplane was equipped with a 3-blade, controllable pitch propeller. All blades remained attached to the hub. The spinner was removed and exhibited impact damage. The propeller blades exhibited bending and chordwise scratching in several locations.

Other pilots who were flying passenger flights on the morning of the accident stated that there were low clouds in the valley in which the accident occurred. Pilots who were assisting with the search and rescue efforts reported that the weather was overcast and the mountain tops were obscured. In addition, the clouds were as low as 600-800 ft overcast above ground level in some of the valleys, including the valley of the accident location.

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	DEHAVILLAND	Registration:	N1249K
Model/Series:	DHC-2 MK.I	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Amateur Built:	No		
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	On-demand air taxi (135)
Operator Designator Code:	S03A		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	VMC	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	PAKT,80 ft msl	Observation Time:	10:53 Local
Distance from Accident Site:	16 Nautical Miles	Temperature/Dew Point:	13°C / 13°C
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 700 ft AGL	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	6 knots / , 150°
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 1800 ft AGL	Visibility:	3 miles
Altimeter Setting:	29.9 inches Hg	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	VFR
Departure Point:	Misty Fjords, AK	Destination:	Ketchikan, AK

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	5 Fatal	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	6 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	55.482583,-131.22532

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Kemner, Heidi

Additional Participating Persons: Dave Keenan; FAA AVP-100; Washington, DC
Tom Johnson; FAA/FSDO; Anchorage, AK
Les Doud; Hartzell Propellers; Piqua, OH
Jim Kosmos; Southeast Aviation; Ketchikan, AK

Note: