



PRELIMINARY REPORT

AIC 16-1003

Hard landing

N8841X

Cessna Aircraft Corporation C182

Tumolbil Airstrip, West Sepik Province

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

24 June 2016

About the AIC

The Accident Investigation Commission (AIC) is an independent statutory agency within Papua New Guinea (PNG). The AIC is governed by a Commission and is entirely separate from the judiciary, transport regulators, policy makers and service providers. The AIC's function is to improve safety and public confidence in the aviation mode of transport through excellence in: independent investigation of aviation accidents and other safety occurrences within the aviation system; safety data recording and analysis; and fostering safety awareness, knowledge and action.

The AIC is responsible for investigating accidents and other transport safety matters involving civil aviation, in PNG, as well as participating in overseas investigations involving PNG registered aircraft. The principal function of the Commission is the investigation of aviation accidents and incidents.

The AIC performs its functions in accordance with the provisions of the PNG Civil Aviation Act 2000 (As Amended), and the Commissions of Inquiry Act 1951 (as amended), and in accordance with Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation.

The object of a safety investigation is to identify and reduce safety-related risk. AIC investigations determine and communicate the safety factors related to the transport safety matter being investigated.

Readers are advised that in accordance with Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, it is not the purpose of an AIC aircraft accident investigation to apportion blame or liability. The sole objective of the investigation and the Final Report is the prevention of accidents and incidents. (Reference: ICAO Annex 13, Chapter 3, paragraph 3.1.)

About this report

Decisions regarding whether to conduct an investigation, and the scope of an investigation, are based on many factors, including the level of safety benefit likely to be obtained from an investigation.

On 24 June 2016, the PNG AIC was informed by Hevi Lift PNG about a Cessna 182 landing accident at Tumolbil airstrip, West Sepik Province. The AIC commenced an on-site investigation on 26 June 2016.

The AIC has produced this Preliminary Report for greater industry awareness of potential safety issues and possible safety actions. It contains only factual information verified within 30 days of the AIC being notified. Analysis, Findings, and Contributing Factors are reserved for the Final Report.

Hard landing resulting in damage to airframe

Occurrence Details

On 24 June 2016 the pilot of a Cessna 182 aircraft, registered N8841X, was conducting a ‘private flight’ delivering medical supplies to Yapsie and Tumolbil, in the West Sepik Province of Papua New Guinea. After unloading supplies at Yapsie the aircraft departed for Tumolbil carrying medical supplies and a bottle of compressed propane gas. The air traffic services (ATS) flight strip showed that the pilot advised ATS that he was in the circuit area at 01:05 UTC¹ and he cancelled SAR² on the ground at 01:06. During the touchdown the nose-wheel heavily impacted the strip surface. The aircraft bounced causing it to pivot about its lateral axis, and strike the rear fuselage on the ground. The pilot, the sole occupant was uninjured.

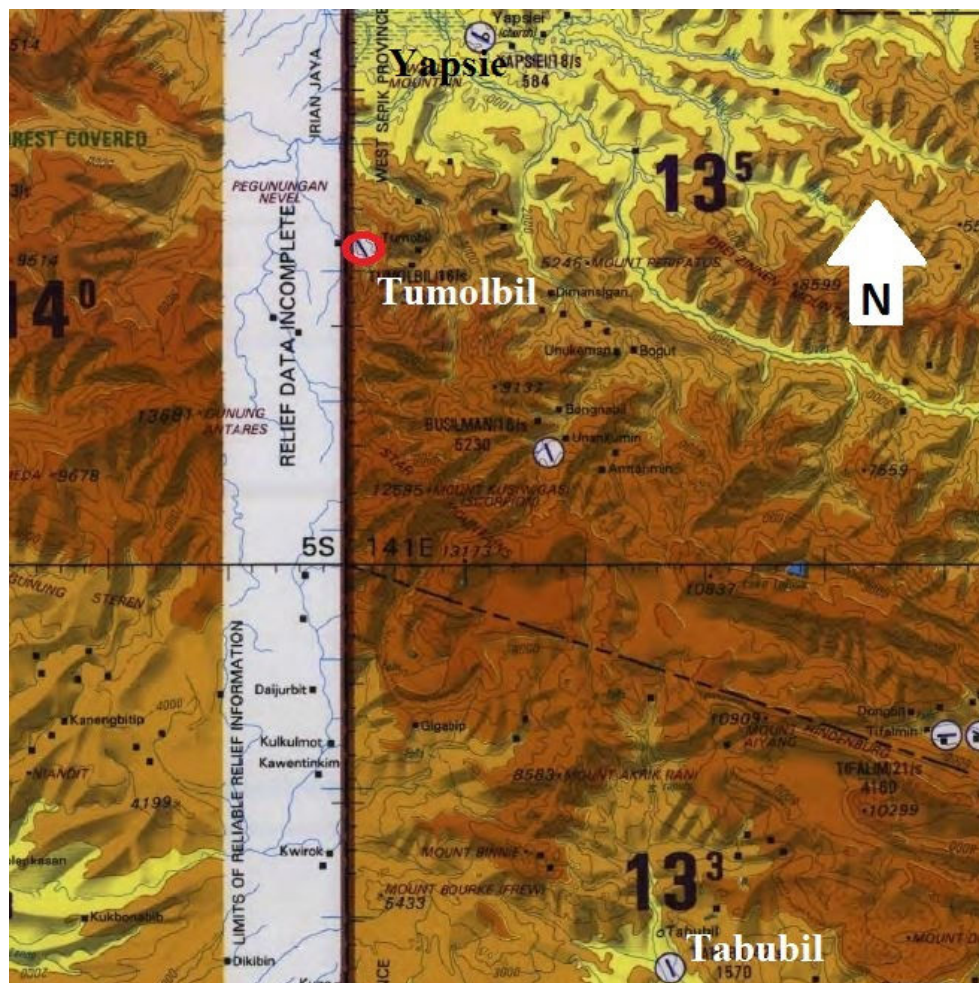


Figure 1: Location of Tumolbil with respect to Tabubil and Yapsie

1 The 24-hour clock, in Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), is used in this report to describe the local time as specific events occurred. Local time in the area of the accident, Papua New Guinea Time (Pacific/Port Moresby Time) is UTC + 10 hours.

2 SAR: Search and Rescue comprises the search for and provision of aid to, persons, and aircraft which are feared to be, in distress or imminent danger.

Background

Tumolbil (04° 46.360 S / 141° 00.713 E) is located about 10 nm (18.8 km) south-west of Yapsie, and 32 nm (59 km) north-west of Tabubil. It is 0.85 nm (1.65 km) east of the PNG-Indonesia border, in a very remote part of the West Sepik province (Figure 1). There are no roads leading to the area or to any adjacent neighbouring villages. The only way in and out of the area is by air.



Figure 2: Aerial view of the Tumolbil Airstrip

The Airstrip

The Tumolbil airstrip, oriented 14/32 (140°M/320°M), is a one-way grass strip 3,367 feet AMSL³ and surrounded by high mountainous, densely vegetated terrain. The airstrip slope is 12% down to the north-west. As published in the PNG AIP⁴, the Tumolbil airstrip is administered by the Sepik Baptiste Inc.



Figure 3: Aircraft at Tumolbil after accident

3 AMSL; above mean sea level.

4 Papua New Guinea Aeronautical Information Publications published for the Authority by the holder of the AIS certificate for the AIP service.

AIC comment

The investigation is continuing and includes analysis of the weather, airstrip condition, aircraft systems and flight controls, and operational aspects including the pilots training and experience in PNG and operations into Tumolbil.

General details

Date and time:	24 June 2016. 01:06 UTC	
Occurrence category:	Accident	
Primary occurrence type:	Heavy landing on challenging airstrip/tail strike	
Damage	Substantial airframe	
Location:	Tumolbil Airstrip, West Sepik Province	
	Latitude: 04° 46.360' S	Longitude: 141° 00.713' E
Type of operation:	Private	
Persons on board:	Crew: 1	Passengers: 0
Injuries:	Crew: 0	Passengers: 0

Crew details

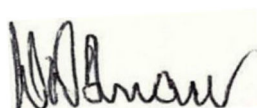
Nationality	United States of America
Licence type	Commercial/Private

Aerodrome details

Aerodrome and code	Tumolbil (AYQL)
Runway directions	14/32
Runway slope	12% down to the NE
Runway surface and strength	Grassed, Brown Gravel
Runway length	496 m
Runway elevation	3,367

Aircraft details

Aircraft manufacturer and model:	Cessna 182
Registration:	N8841X

Approved

David Inau, ML
Chief Executive Officer
20 July 2016

Appendix A

Summary of correspondence between Wings of Hope PNG Inc., and PNG authorities

5 August 2015, The aircraft owner/pilot wrote to CEO CASA, and informed him that the aircraft had just cleared customs in Vanimo. He stated *“We plan to keep the aircraft here so we want to register it into PNG”*. He requested the required documents to complete the process. He also requested the details of the person to provide permission to operate the aircraft while the registration process was completed.

6 August 2015, the acting CEO CASA provided Wings of Hope PNG Inc., with the names and contact details for CASA personnel responsible for Operational matters, CofA, CofR, and maintenance/airworthiness, and Pilot/AME licencing.

31 August 2015, The aircraft owner/pilot of Wings of Hope PNG Inc., informed CASA and DoT that *“I have arranged for a pilot from Sunbird Aviation to provide training and check out to airstrips in this area”*.

1 September 2015, the First Assistant Secretary of the DoT wrote to Wings of Hope PNG Inc., and copied to the CASA Manager Flying Operations, stating that he would be recommending an approval of 3 months while the PNG registration process was completed.

7 September 2015, Mr Lewis wrote to DOT requesting 6-months permission.

21 September 2015, *DOT letter Ref 3/2* to Wings of Hope PNG Inc., from Secretary DOT granted 3-months approval effective 21 September 2015 to 21 December 2015 subject to conditions which included that the aircraft must be placed on the P2 register within 3 months.

21 September 2015 the *DOT letter Ref 3/8* to Wings of Hope PNG Inc., from the Secretary DoT was copied to the CEO CASAPNG.

It stated: *“... the Department hereby grants authorisation for use of the foreign registered Cessna 182 bearing registration N8841X. The aircraft will be used for air ambulance transportation including other aero medical services for a period of one year effective 21st December 2015 to 21st December 2016...*

... The tenure of the type of aircraft operations in country places the requirement of registering the aircraft under PNG’s aircraft registry imperative. Please contact [name supplied for the Manager Flying Operations] at PNGCASA immediately to ensure this requirement is met.”

28 October 2015: Wings of Hope PNG Inc., wrote to DoT stating their concerns about the cost of maintenance, and requested indefinite USA registration in order to use FAA licenced engineers. He stated that another charity operator Samaritan Aviation continues to have their aircraft in USA registration and operated and maintained by FAA licenced pilots and engineers.