



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

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<b>Location:</b>	Las Cruces, NM	<b>Accident Number:</b>	DEN04TA088
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	06/09/2004, 2110 MDT	<b>Registration:</b>	N9474L
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Cessna C172P	<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Serious, 1 Minor
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Public Aircraft		

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## Analysis

Shortly after takeoff, the low voltage light illuminated and the pilot elected to return to land. The pilot transmitted on the Unicom frequency that he was "turning base to final for runway 26" when in fact he was turning base to final for runway 22. The pilot of another airplane heard this report and elected to take off on runway 22. The pilot of the accident airplane sighted the other aircraft on the runway and elected to make a 360-degree turn for spacing purposes. During the turn, the airplane struck large mesquite bushes and was destroyed when it collided with terrain. Prior to the flight, the pilot performed three takeoffs and landings to a full stop to renew his night flight currency for the carriage of passengers. His last night flight was on September 1, 2003. According to the pilot, he had flown 6.9 hours on the day of the accident.

## Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: the pilot's failure to maintain clearance from terrain and the improper go-around procedure. Contributing factors include the pilot's diverted attention, improper in-flight planning and decision making, pilot fatigue, the night conditions and the mesquite bushes.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER  
Phase of Operation: GO-AROUND (VFR)

### Findings

1. ELECTRICAL SYSTEM, VOLTMETER - LOW LEVEL
  2. COMMUNICATIONS - INACCURATE - PILOT IN COMMAND
  3. (F) DIVERTED ATTENTION - PILOT IN COMMAND
  4. (F) IN-FLIGHT PLANNING/DECISION - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND
  5. (C) GO-AROUND - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND
  6. (C) ALTITUDE/CLEARANCE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
  7. (F) FATIGUE (FLIGHT SCHEDULE) - PILOT IN COMMAND
  8. (F) LIGHT CONDITION - NIGHT
  9. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - HIGH VEGETATION
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Occurrence #2: NOSE OVER  
Phase of Operation: GO-AROUND (VFR)

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Private	<b>Age:</b>	75
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine Land	<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None
<b>Flight Time:</b>	850 hours (Total, all aircraft), 416 hours (Total, this make and model), 623 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 16 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 9 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 7 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Cessna	<b>Registration:</b>	N9474L
<b>Model/Series:</b>	C172P	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Operator:</b>	Civil Air Patrol	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Lycoming
<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	O-360-A4A
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Public Aircraft		

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual Conditions	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Night
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	LRU, 4456 ft msl	<b>Weather Information Source:</b>	Weather Observation Facility
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:</b>	8 knots / , 270°
<b>Temperature:</b>	27° C	<b>Visibility</b>	10 Miles
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>			
<b>Departure Point:</b>	Las Cruces, NM (LRU)	<b>Destination:</b>	ALBUQUERQUE, NM (ABQ)

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>	LAS CRUCES INTERNATIONAL (LRU)	<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	Asphalt
<b>Runway Used:</b>	22	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	Dry
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>	7499 ft / 100 ft		

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 Serious, 1 Minor	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	32.290000, -106.921667		

## Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): David C Bowling

Adopted Date: 09/29/2004

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](mailto:pubinq@ntsb.gov), or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at <http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/>.

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The Independent Safety Board Act, as codified at 49 U.S.C. Section 1154(b), precludes the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an incident or accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report.