

National Transportation Safety Board  
Washington, DC 20594

Brief of Accident

Adopted 02/28/2008

LAX06FA124 File No. 23074	02/26/2006	California City, CA	Aircraft Reg No. N39DF	Time (Local): 08:28 PST	
Make/Model: Aero Vodochody / L39			Fatal	Serious	Minor/None
Engine Make/Model: Ivchenko / AI126TL			Crew 2	0	0
Aircraft Damage: Destroyed			Pass 0	0	0
Number of Engines: 1					
Operating Certificate(s): None					
Type of Flight Operation: Other Work Use					
Reg. Flight Conducted Under: Part 91: General Aviation					

Last Depart. Point: Van Nuys, CA  
Destination: Local Flight  
Airport Proximity: Off Airport/Airstrip

Condition of Light: Day  
Weather Info Src: Witness  
Basic Weather: Visual Conditions  
Lowest Ceiling: None  
Visibility: 25.00 SM  
Wind Dir/Speed: Light and Variable  
Temperature (°C): 16  
Precip/Obscuration: No Obscuration; No Precipitation

Pilot-in-Command Age: 43

Flight Time (Hours)

Certificate(s)/Rating(s)  
Airline Transport; Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land; Glider  
Instrument Ratings  
Airplane

Total All Aircraft: 5500  
Last 90 Days: Unk/Nr  
Total Make/Model: Unk/Nr  
Total Instrument Time: Unk/Nr

The flight crew in the accident airplane and the producer-director in a second camera ship departed for a planned aerial photography flight. During the filming operation, the director issued a series of instructions to the accident flight crew, and the flight crew maneuvered their airplane pursuant to the instructions. After filming for about 1 hour, the producer, who was in the camera ship at 5,500 feet mean sea level (msl), directed that the accident airplane's crew to perform a "sharp snap roll to the right and pull down out of frame." The crew responded by rolling into a right 135-degree bank and descending. During the attempted recovery from the near split "S" course reversal turn, the airplane impacted the underlying 3,100-foot elevation hillside. Cameras in the accident airplane and the camera ship recorded video and audio during the accident flight that was reviewed during the investigation. No abnormalities in the accident aircraft were observed. The severity of the impact and fire damage to flight controls and associated system components precluded confirmation of their preimpact integrity. Examination of available airframe and engine components revealed no evidence of preimpact mechanical malfunction.

Brief of Accident (Continued)

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Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER  
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING - TURN TO REVERSE DIRECTION

Findings

1. TERRAIN CONDITION - MOUNTAINOUS/HILLY
2. (C) LOW ALTITUDE FLIGHT/MANEUVER - INTENTIONAL - FLIGHTCREW
3. (C) ALTITUDE/CLEARANCE - INADEQUATE - FLIGHTCREW

Findings Legend: (C) = Cause, (F) = Factor

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The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident as follows.

The flight crew's failure to maintain terrain clearance during an intentionally performed course reversal turn at low altitude.