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Transport Canada Air / Transports Canada Air

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT REPORT
RAPPORT D'ACCIDENT D'AVIATION

"This accident was investigated to provide guidance toward the prevention of a recurrence. The content of this report is confined to cause-related circumstances and is published for accident prevention purposes only".

P40015 Grumman G73 CF-HPA

DATE: 5 Mar 74 1630 PST
OPERATION: Commercial DAMAGE: Substantial
PLACE: Prince Rupert, B.C. 54/19N 130/14W
LOCALE: Bush area on mountain side
WEATHER: Cloud 1600 scattered, vis 8, temp 29°F, wind NNW15
PILOT: Sr. Commercial

TOTAL HOURS:	3890	ALL	306	ON TYPE
LAST 90 DAYS:	144	ALL	83	ON TYPE

CASUALTIES: Crew: 1 killed; Pass: 2 killed, 6 serious, 1 minor
OCCURRENCE: While in a turn shortly after takeoff the aircraft struck the side of a hill. The engines were producing power and no mechanical fault was found.

The aircraft had departed from the seaplane base at Prince Rupert for a VFR flight and started its takeoff run in a southeasterly direction along Fern Passage. It became airborne after a longer than normal run, according to several passengers, veered slightly to the right and then started a turn to the left. The turn continued for about 180° after which the wings levelled. The aircraft was then heading toward steeply rising ground; it began to strike trees at about 425 feet above sea level. It came to rest against a tree in a steep nosedown attitude.

The pilot had started the left turn toward the higher ground from an altitude that was too low for the aircraft to outclimb the rising terrain. Why he did not first climb to an adequate height straight ahead along Fern Passage or turn to the right, where the terrain was lower, was not determined. It is also apparent that he underestimated the aircraft's turning radius.

The Flight Manual for this aircraft states that a rate of climb of 1200 feet per minute can be achieved after takeoff. In this instance, an average rate of climb of only 250 fpm was obtained. The reason for the apparent subnormal performance of the aircraft could not be determined.

The aircraft's gross weight was estimated to be 12,899 lbs. which is slightly above maximum certified takeoff weight.

The freight and baggage on the aircraft was not tied down and was thrown forward during the crash.

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The company had no training records for this pilot and there was no evidence of an organized pilot training program. The pilot's records revealed that the Mallard was the largest aircraft he had flown. He had received about 3 hours and 45 minutes dual instruction on the aircraft from the ferry pilot who delivered it and he then carried out solo practice before conducting revenue flights.

FINDINGS

- The aircraft did not achieve its published climb performance after takeoff.

- The pilot overestimated the performance capability of the aircraft.

- The carrier was not in compliance with the standards laid down in Air Navigation Order Series 7, Number 3 in respect of pilot training and checking, aircraft dispatch, and operational control.

- The Ministry of Transport had not adequately monitored or enforced standards applicable to this carrier.

