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Short Investigation Bulletin

DATE: August 18th, 2023
REPORT # OCC-2023/0025
AIRCRAFT REGISTRATION: C6-PAA
INVESTIGATION STATUS: Complete

Summary

Occurrence Bulletins are concise reports that detail the facts surrounding an aviation occurrence, as received in the initial notification and any follow-up enquiries. They provide an opportunity to share safety messages in the absence of a full investigation.

Released as required, the Bulletin provides a summary of the less-complex factual investigation reports conducted by the AAIA. The results, based on information supplied by organizations or individuals involved in the occurrence, detail the facts behind the event, as well as any safety actions undertaken. When applicable, the Bulletin also highlights important Safety Messages for the broader aviation community, drawing on earlier AAIA investigations and research.

General Details

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|---------------------|
| Date and Time of Occurrence: | July 21 st , 2023; 7:30 pm (2330 UTC) | | |
| Location | James Cistern, Eleuthera, Bahamas | | |
| Persons on Board | Crew | 1 | Passengers 3 |
| Injuries: | Crew | 0 | Passengers 0 |
| Commanders License: | Commercial | | |
| Occurrence category: | System Component Failure- Power Plant | | |
| Occurrence type: | Accident | | |
| Investigation status: | Complete | | |

Aircraft Details

| | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Aircraft Type and Registration: | Piper Aztec PA-23-250, C6-PAA |
| Year of Manufacture & Serial #: | 27-7754004 |
| Number and Type of Engine(s) | Twin Lycoming IO-540-C4B5 |
| Type of operation: | Commercial |
| Information Source: | Pilot |
| Nature of Damage: | Aircraft Submerged |

Occurrence Summary

On the 21st July 2023, at approximately 7:30 pm EDT (2330 UTC), a Piper Aztec (PA-23-250) aircraft with Bahamas registration C6-PAA was ditched into waters near the settlement of James Cistern, Eleuthera, Bahamas.

The flight departed from the Governors Harbor Airport (MYEM), Eleuthera, Bahamas with a final destination of Lynden Pindling International Airport (MYNN), Nassau, Bahamas with four (4) persons on board. The flight operated under Visual Flight Rules (VFR).

The pilot reported that shortly after departing MYEM, approximately 12 minutes into the flight, he observed a loss of power to the number 1 (left) engine. He stated that following the loss of the left engine, he proceeded to follow the emergency procedures as prescribed by the aircraft manufacturer.

Upon observing that the aircraft was unable to maintain altitude with only the right engine, a decision was made to return to MYEM while at a distance of approximately 35 miles from the field. At this time, Nassau air traffic control was advised.

As the aircraft continued to lose altitude, the pilot subsequently determined that he would have to ditch the aircraft and he briefed the passengers of the situation and preparations were made for ditching.

After impacting the water, approximately 12 miles west of the coast of James Cistern, Eleuthera, Bahamas, the pilot and passengers successfully exited the aircraft and they were all individually equipped with a life vest and also had use of a deployable life raft. Local fisherman came to their aid approximately 20 minutes later and all four (4) persons were rescued. The aircraft was lost to the ocean. There were no injuries reported.

The weather at the time of the accident was visual meteorological conditions (VMC) and not a factor.

A post-accident review of the aircraft maintenance records was conducted. The AAIA concluded that the aircraft was consistently maintained and inspected as prescribed by the manufacturers' maintenance manual and current with the Civil Aviation Authority of The Bahamas (CAA-B) regulations.

There were no safety recommendations issued in relation to this occurrence.



Fig.1 Google Earth imagery of position of C6-PAA

This Occurrence Bulletin contains facts which have been determined up to the time of issue. It is published to inform the aviation industry and the public of the general circumstances of accidents and serious incidents and should be regarded as tentative and subject to alteration or correction if additional evidence becomes available.

All AAIA investigations are conducted in accordance with Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, and The Aircraft Accident Investigation Authority Act and Regulations. The sole objective of the investigation of an accident or incident under these Regulations is the prevention of future accidents and incidents. It is not the purpose of such an investigation to apportion blame or liability. Accordingly, it is inappropriate that AAIA reports should be used to assign fault or blame or determine liability, since neither the investigation nor the reporting process has been undertaken for that purpose.