

Log 23600B



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594
Safety Recommendation

Date: August 2, 1993
In reply refer to: A-93-86

Mr. George P. Howard
President
Airports Council
International-North America
1220 19th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

On March 26, 1991, a Beech F33A, N7224L, fell through the taxiway pavement, while taxiing at Peachtree DeKalb Airport in Chamblee, Georgia.

The pilot stated that as he was taxiing to the runway, the left main wheel fell through the pavement and the airplane made a violent left turn and came to a stop. After exiting the airplane, the pilot said he could see that the pavement had given way and that the wheel had fallen through the hole in the pavement. The airplane was substantially damaged, but the pilot and passenger were not injured.

According to the airport manager, storm drainage pipes had been installed beneath many areas of the aircraft operating area of the airport approximately 50 years ago. The soil beneath the pavement and surrounding the pipe in this area had been eroded through infiltration into the pipe. This process had left a void beneath the pavement, and consequently, the wheel from N7224L punctured the pavement and fell into the hole.

Also according to the airport manager, the soil surrounding storm drainage pipes in other areas of the airport had eroded in much the same manner during the 9 months preceding the accident. The storm drainage pipes at Peachtree DeKalb Airport had not been inspected since they were installed.

Although the Safety Board is not aware of previous accidents or incidents caused by soil erosion, it believes that reasonable preventative efforts should be made where possible to preclude this type of accident from recurring.

Therefore, the National Transportation Safety Board recommends that the Airport Council International-North America:

Inform airport operators of the circumstances of this accident and alert them of the potential for erosion near underground pipelines, and urge them to restrict operations on any areas that are identified as potentially hazardous until they are repaired.
(Class II, Priority Action) (A-93-86)

Also, as a result of its investigation, the Safety Board has issued Safety Recommendation A-93-84 to the Federal Aviation Administration and Safety Recommendation A-93-85 to the American Association of Airport Executives.

The National Transportation Safety Board is an independent Federal agency with the statutory responsibility "...to promote transportation safety by conducting independent accident investigations and by formulating safety improvement recommendations" (Public Law 93-633). The Safety Board is vitally interested in any actions taken as result of its safety recommendations and would appreciate a response from you regarding action taken or contemplated with respect to the recommendation in this letter. Please refer to Safety Recommendation A-93-86 in your reply.

Chairman VOGT, Vice Chairman COUGHLIN, and Members LAUBER, HART, and HAMMERSCHMIDT concurred in this recommendation.



By: Carl W. Vogt
Chairman