National Transportation Safety Board Washington, DC 20594

Printed on: 03/23/2015 07:58:15 AM

Total Instrument Time: 750

Brief of Accident

Adopted 07/29/2013

ERA12LA474

Instrument Ratings
Airplane

File No. 31464 07/23/2012 Westerly, RI Aircraft Reg No. N7313Z Time (Local): 15:02 EDT Make/Model: Piper/PA-25-235 Fatal Serious Minor/None Engine Make/Model: Lycoming / O-540-B4B5 Crew 0 0 1 Aircraft Damage: Substantial Pass 0 0 0 Number of Engines: 1 Operating Certificate(s): None Type of Flight Operation: Banner Tow Reg. Flight Conducted Under: Part 91: General Aviation Last Depart. Point: Westerly, RI Condition of Light: Day Destination: Local Flight, RI Weather Info Src: Weather Observation Facility Airport Proximity: Off Airport/Airstrip Basic Weather: Visual Conditions Lowest Ceiling: 1600 Ft. AGL, Broken Visibility: 10.00 SM Wind Dir/Speed: 210 / 009 kts Temperature (°C): 26 Precip/Obscuration: No Obscuration; No Precipitation Pilot-in-Command Age: 41 Flight Time (Hours) Certificate(s)/Rating(s) Total All Aircraft: 9175 Airline Transport; Multi-engine Land; Multi-engine Sea; Single-engine Land; Single-engine Sea; Glider; Helicopter Last 90 Days: 300 Total Make/Model: 1500

*** Note: NTSB investigators may not have traveled in support of this investigation and used data provided by various sources to prepare this aircraft accident report. ***

About 12 minutes into a local banner towing flight, while flying 650 feet above the ocean, the airplane's engine began running roughly. The pilot responded by increasing the throttle to full, richening the mixture, and applying carburetor heat, all to no avail. Shortly thereafter, the engine lost power completely, so the pilot performed a forced landing to the ocean and was later rescued by civilian boaters. The airplane was recovered from the ocean more than 1 week after the accident. The pilot/operator was able to perform a cursory inspection of the engine at the time, but no definitive cause for the loss of power was identified. Due to the salt water-damaged state of the engine, no further detailed examination could be completed. At the time of the accident, the engine had accumulated nearly 2,300 hours since its most recent overhaul and 150 hours since its most recent annual inspection. Weather conditions at an airport 6 miles from the accident location were conducive to the formation of serious carburetor ice at glide power settings.

Updated at Jul 29 2013 9:47AM

Brief of Accident (Continued)

ERA12LA474 File No. 31464

07/23/2012

Westerly,RI

Aircraft Reg No. N7313Z

Time (Local): 15:02 EDT

OCCURRENCES

Enroute - Loss of engine power (total) Emergency descent - Ditching

FINDINGS

Not determined-Not determined-(general)-(general)-Unknown/Not determined - C

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

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident as follows:
A total loss of engine power for reasons that could not be determined due to the postaccident salt water-damaged state of the engine.