



# Aviation Investigation Preliminary Report

|                                |                                      |                         |            |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| <b>Location:</b>               | Charlottesville, VA                  | <b>Accident Number:</b> | ERA25FA103 |
| <b>Date &amp; Time:</b>        | January 25, 2025, 12:35 Local        | <b>Registration:</b>    | N2UZ       |
| <b>Aircraft:</b>               | Beech V35B                           | <b>Injuries:</b>        | 1 Fatal    |
| <b>Flight Conducted Under:</b> | Part 91: General aviation - Personal |                         |            |

On January 25, 2025, about 1235 eastern standard time, a Beech V35B, N2UZ, was destroyed when it was involved in an accident near Charlottesville, Virginia. The airline transport pilot was fatally injured. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 personal flight.

According to preliminary Federal Aviation Administration air traffic control communication data, the pilot made radio contact with the Charlottesville-Albemarle Airport (CHO) control tower at 1230. He declared an emergency and stated that the airplane was 10 miles south of the airport, at 5,500 ft mean sea level, and had experienced a total loss of engine power. The controller acknowledged the information and offered runway 3 to the pilot; however, at 1233, the pilot reported that the airplane was 3 to 4 miles south of the airport, and he was not going to be able to glide the airplane to the airport. The pilot added that he was going to try to land in a field south of the airport. The pilot subsequently stated that he was attempting to land in a field near a river, and the controller replied that he would send first responders to that location. No further communications were received from the accident airplane.

Review of Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast (ADS-B) data revealed that the airplane approached the approximate 1,800-ft-long field about 100 knots on a magnetic course about 310°. The airplane overflew the field and collided with trees at the end.

A debris path was observed at the end of the snow-covered field, which began with a portion of the inboard left wing and its fuel bladder, imbedded in a tree about 3 ft above the ground. The debris path extended about 175 ft on a magnetic course of 310°. An outboard section of left wing was located about 40 ft along the debris path, followed by the first ground scar 20 ft beyond that. Near the ground scar, outboard sections of both wings were identified. A section of wing was suspended in a tree and was also near the first ground scar, and the left main landing gear was located 20 ft beyond the ground scar. The main wreckage came to rest at the end of the debris path, inverted, and oriented on a north heading.

A postcrash fire consumed a majority of the main wreckage. Although the left main landing gear separated, the right main landing gear remained parallel to the right wing spar, consistent with a gear retracted position. Additionally, the nose landing gear remained attached to the fuselage, inside the gear well. A flap actuator was recovered, and measurement of its arm corresponded to a flaps position of between 0 and 5°. Measurement of the elevator trim actuator corresponded to a 5° tab down (nose-up) position.

The engine was recovered to a storage facility and examined. The propeller remained attached to the engine. All three propeller blades remained attached to the hub and did not exhibit rotational damage. The No. 2 cylinder exhibited impact damage, and the No. 4 cylinder valve cover was melted. The propeller would not rotate by hand. It was noted that only one of the three nuts remained that secured the oil filter mount. The mount was loose against the housing and the other two nuts were not located. The oil sump was subsequently removed to facilitate borescope examination, and only residual oil remained. A crack in the engine case was observed near the camshaft gear. Borescope examination revealed multiple metal fragments near a crankshaft counterweight. Additionally, metal fragments were found in the oil sump and oil filter element.

### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

|                                  |         |                                       |          |
|----------------------------------|---------|---------------------------------------|----------|
| <b>Aircraft Make:</b>            | Beech   | <b>Registration:</b>                  | N2UZ     |
| <b>Model/Series:</b>             | V35B    | <b>Aircraft Category:</b>             | Airplane |
| <b>Amateur Built:</b>            |         |                                       |          |
| <b>Operator:</b>                 | On file | <b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b> | None     |
| <b>Operator Designator Code:</b> |         |                                       |          |

### Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

|   |                      |                                     |                       |
|---|----------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>     | VMC                  | <b>Condition of Light:</b>          | Day                   |
| <b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b> | CHO,640 ft msl       | <b>Observation Time:</b>            | 12:53 Local           |
| <b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>     | 2 Nautical Miles     | <b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>       | 3°C /-11°C            |
| <b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>          | Clear                | <b>Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:</b> | 9 knots / , 200°      |
| <b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>                  | None                 | <b>Visibility:</b>                  | 10 miles              |
| <b>Altimeter Setting:</b>               | 30.33 inches Hg      | <b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>   | None                  |
| <b>Departure Point:</b>                 | Rockingham, NC (RCZ) | <b>Destination:</b>                 | Westminster, MD (DMW) |

## Wreckage and Impact Information

|                            |         |                             |                      |
|----------------------------|---------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Crew Injuries:</b>      | 1 Fatal | <b>Aircraft Damage:</b>     | Destroyed            |
| <b>Passenger Injuries:</b> | N/A     | <b>Aircraft Fire:</b>       | On-ground            |
| <b>Ground Injuries:</b>    | N/A     | <b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>  | None                 |
| <b>Total Injuries:</b>     | 1 Fatal | <b>Latitude, Longitude:</b> | 38.096676,-78.454202 |

## Administrative Information

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>     | Gretz, Robert   |
| <b>Additional Participating Persons:</b> | Nikolas Kubli; FAA/FSDO; Richmond, VA<br>Ryan Roth; Textron Aviation ; Wichita, KS<br>J Ferrell; Continental Motors; Mobile, AL |
| <b>Investigation Class:</b>              | <a href="#">Class 3</a>   |
| <b>Note:</b>                             |   |