



# Aviation Investigation Preliminary Report

<b>Location:</b>	Lexington, SC	<b>Accident Number:</b>	ERA26FA106
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	February 6, 2026, 09:21 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N705CD
<b>Aircraft:</b>	CIRRUS DESIGN CORP SR22	<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal, 1 Serious
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

On February 6, 2026, at 0921 eastern standard time, a Cirrus Design Corp SR22, N705CD, was substantially damaged when it was involved in an accident near Lexington, South Carolina. The commercial pilot sustained serious injuries and the passenger was fatally injured. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 personal flight.

The pilot departed Pryor Field Regional Airport (DCU) Decatur, Alabama (home base) on February 3, 2026, with full fuel tanks and made 2 stops for additional fueling. The flight terminated at Wilmington International Airport (ILM), Wilmington, North Carolina where he stopped for the evening. The pilot resumed the flight on February 4, 2026, and landed at the destination airport; Columbia Metro Airport (CAE), Columbia, South Carolina where he parked for 2 nights. According to witnesses, the pilot informed the fixed base operator that he did not require any services and that he would get fuel upon departure. The pilot did not order fuel.

Witnesses stated that on February 6, 2026, about 0800, the pilot and passenger arrived at CAE and conducted a preflight inspection. After moving the airplane into the sunlight to “warm it up and melt the frost,” the pilot taxied out to runway 27 and departed to for the intended destination of DCU, about 295 nautical miles west northwest.

Preliminary air traffic control communications and ADS-B data provided by the Federal Aviation Administration revealed that the flight departed on an instrument flight rules flight plan from runway 29 and flew along a ground track of 282°. Air traffic control cleared the pilot to climb and maintain 8,000 ft msl and cleared him to proceed directly to DCU. The pilot acknowledged the clearance and proceeded to climb. The airplane’s ground track, groundspeed, and climb were steady and unremarkable until the airplane was about 13 nautical miles west of CAE. Shortly after the airplane reached 8,000 ft msl the pilot declared “mayday, mayday, mayday,” and informed the controller that “we just lost our engine” and confirmed that he was declaring an emergency. The pilot reported to the controller that there

was an airport directly below that he intended to divert to. The airport was White Plains Airport (SC99), Lexington, South Carolina and was located about 1 1/2 miles south of the airplane's position at that time. The pilot also reported that the airplane had about 45 gallons of fuel onboard.

SC99 was a private airport community with a 3,000-ft-long paved runway configured in a 9/27 orientation, at an elevation of 524 ft. As the airplane flew past SC99, the pilot initiated a left turn toward the south while the airplane was descending through 6,400 ft msl. It remained on that track for about 2 miles before making a right teardrop turn toward the northeast, followed by a left teardrop turn to the south (see figure). The turning maneuvers were all conducted about 1 1/2-mile west of the airport before the pilot flew toward the airport and joined the right downwind leg of the traffic pattern for runway 27 at 1,600 ft msl (1,100 agl) and 120 kts groundspeed.

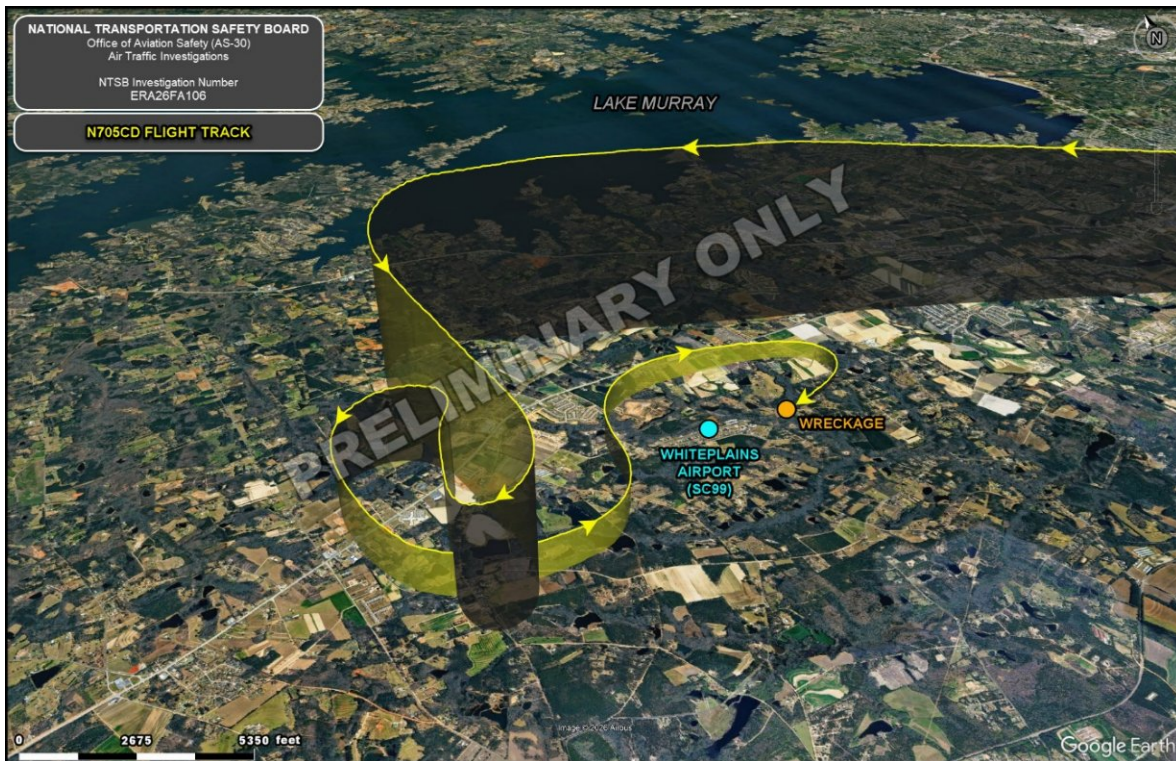


Figure - ADS-B flight track data for the final 8 minutes of the accident flight (yellow line) with SC99 (blue) and the accident site/wreckage annotated (orange).

Residential home security cameras captured the airplane making a steep right turn from the base leg of the traffic pattern to the final approach leg, and the associated audio was consistent with the propeller windmilling without engine power. The camera captured the airplane when it was about 1,290 ft msl and 81 kts groundspeed (when correlated with the ADS-B data). Nearing the end of the turn, while on final approach, the airplane's altitude had decreased to 1,090 ft msl and the groundspeed decreased to 73 kts.

The airplane's last ADS-B-observed position was recorded as it descended through 790 ft msl (about 300 ft agl), at 70 kts groundspeed, and about 2,100 ft east of the runway 27 threshold. Shortly after, the airplane impacted the top of 65-ft-tall pine trees about 1,000 ft from the runway threshold. The airplane rolled inverted and impacted a level gravel road before coming to rest against trees.

The wreckage path was oriented on a magnetic heading of 277° and was 150 ft long from the initial tree impact to the main wreckage location, which was at an elevation of 454 ft. There was no postimpact fire. The airplane and all of its flight controls, wings, horizontal and vertical surfaces remained attached in their respective locations on the airframe. The top of the cockpit/cabin area sustained crushing damage and was compressed midway down the fuselage and the instrument panel was crushed aft and downward into the seats. The left and right outboard 18-inches of the wingtips were tree impact-separated and were discovered at the start of the wreckage path.

The airplane was equipped with a whole airframe parachute system, which was not deployed. The handle inside the cockpit, used to deploy the parachute, was dislodged from the holder assembly about 2-inches and the safety pin was not installed. The rocket motor was not actuated, and the parachute was still in the enclosure. The cover separated during the impact sequence.

Flight control continuity was confirmed from the cockpit to all of the flight control surfaces, which remained attached to their respective locations and moved freely. The aileron trim was in the neutral position. The elevator trim was in the nose up position. Both wing flaps and the actuator were in the 50% setting.

The left and right wings sustained leading edge impact damage but otherwise remained intact and attached to the fuselage. Both left and right fuel tanks and their associated collector tanks were examined through the bottom fuel tank access panels. The fuel selector valve was set to left wing fuel tank. Continuity of fuel line for the right wing could not be confirmed due to a jammed fuel selector. Throttle, mixture, and propeller control continuity were established from the cockpit to their respective engine attach points. The airplane wreckage was in an inverted position for about 28 hours until it was uprighted during the recovery process. After being uprighted, about 3 total gallons of liquid was discovered that had consistency, scent, and color of 100LL aviation fuel. There was no breach of either fuel tank. The gascolator was absent of debris.

The three aluminum propeller blades remained attached to propeller hub and the assembly remained attached to the engine. One blade was undamaged. The two opposing blades were uniformly bent aft and had deep gouges and scrapes. There was little leading-edge damage. The spinner had uniform crushing damage to one side of the spinner where it was compressed against the propeller hub. The propeller governor and control linkages were intact and free to move.

The engine compartment was damaged by impact forces. The engine oil dipstick was removed and indicated about 7 quarts of oil. The oil appeared fresh and was a gold almond color. There was no evidence of catastrophic damage to the engine crankcase. The engine's crankshaft was rotated manually through 720° via the propeller assembly. Crankshaft and valvetrain continuity could not be confirmed. Anomalous damage was discovered to the camshaft gear. There was partial compression and suction to some of the cylinders and the valve action was anomalous. Examination of the engine interior with a borescope revealed valve strikes to 5 of the 6 pistons, and there was no internal evidence of preignition or detonation.

The fuel injectors were free of any obstructions and the interior faces of all six fuel injectors appeared normal. The engine-driven fuel pump was actuated and functioned normally. The auxiliary boost pump was destroyed by impact forces. The spark plugs displayed normal coloration and wear when compared to the Champion Check-A-Plug chart. Both left and right magnetos were manually actuated with a drill and rotation yielded healthy blue/purple sparks on all of the posts at multiple rpm settings.

The wreckage was recovered and retained for further examination.

### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	CIRRUS DESIGN CORP	<b>Registration:</b>	N705CD
<b>Model/Series:</b>	SR22	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Amateur Built:</b>			
<b>Operator:</b>	LEARJETJOHN FLYING CLUB LLC	<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>	CAE,224 ft msl	<b>Observation Time:</b>	08:56 Local
<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	12 Nautical Miles	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	1°C /-3°C
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Clear	<b>Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:</b>	4 knots / None, 240°
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Visibility:</b>	8 miles
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	29.91 inches Hg	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	IFR
<b>Departure Point:</b>	Columbia, SC (CAE)	<b>Destination:</b>	Decatur, AL (DCU)

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 Serious	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal, 1 Serious	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	33.963946,-81.350521 (est)

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Mccarter, Lawrence
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	Jason Arthur; FAA FSDO; Columbia, SC Mark Haroldson; Cirrus; Duluth, MN J Ferrell; Continental ; Mobile, AL
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class 3</a>
<b>Note:</b>	